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On the Discrimination of Realisms in the Literary Work of Art

MENACHEM BRINKER

The vocabulary of 'realist' and 'realism' is extremely confusing, and there is virtually no hope of introducing order into the use of these terms, since any attempt at unifying our use of them will require the reformulation of a great many terminologies in the rich theoretical literature of the past. Readers no longer certain about the exact meaning of these terms must deduce it from the implied or explicit opposites of 'realist' and 'realism' in each text. 'Realist' takes on a more precise and unambiguous meaning when contrasted with 'romantic' or 'symbolist', 'abstract' or 'schematic', 'fantastic' or 'idealisational'.

An attempt at a systematic description of admissible and responsible uses of the vocabulary of 'realism' in theoretical and critical writings on literature, theatre, the cinema and the visual arts is, therefore, desirable in itself. But such an attempt may also lead us to a better understanding of nothing less than the possibilities of literary and artistic representation.

I

The term 'realist' when predicated of a literary or artistic representation may denote the following :

1) Its belonging to a specific literary (or artistic) school or trend, which is differentiated from other schools and trends by its thematic preferences,

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artistic devices, etc. Its opposites in this case will be, for example, 'symbolist' or 'romantic'.

2) The qualities of the representation within the given literary or artistic work. Its opposites in this case will be terms such as 'abstract' or 'schematic' whereas the 'realist' representation would be described as 'rich', or 'vivid', or 'illusionistic' (the latter in the sense of tending to create the illusion of a full resemblance to reality).[1]

3) The relation of the representation within the work to reality outside it. In this case its opposites would be 'fantastic', 'idealisational' or simply 'unrealistic'.

Each of these fundamental meanings of 'realism', moreover, can itself be interpreted in a number of ways. There have been, for example, many 'realisms' in the history of arts, and each of them has been described diferently by different scholars. The second fundamental meaning of 'realist'- that which has to do with the 'lifelikeness' of the representation- is particularly pregnant with submeanings : a description that is lifelike may be construed to be 'vivid' or 'detailed' or 'complete' or 'natural' in the sense of being unconventional and free of cliche.[2] As for the third fundamental meaning, a novel may be regarded 'very realistic' in presenting a locale or a milieu and yet 'very unrealistic' in describing the psychology or the motivation of the people belonging to this milieu.

It is nevertheless useful to distinguish clearly these three kinds of uses of 'realism' even if there are works of art to which we may legitimately ascribe the term in two or all of its fundamental uses.

In what follows I intend to analyse only the second and third meanings of 'realist', which I shall call the first and second *universal* meanings of the term. I will therefore confine my discussion of historical 'realism' to remarking the difference between them and those 'realisms' which are universal in the sense that they may be ascribed to an artistic representation irrespective of its period or place.

The identification of a specific historial 'realism' is usually done in terms of one or both universal 'realisms', or, more precisely, in terms of universal qualities of representation. For instance, the historical phenomenon described by E. Auerbach as realism, culminating in the 19th-century novel is characterised not only by a union of the separate 'stylistic levels' of antiquity and classicism but also by a greater completeness in the presentation of human life.[3] The historical phenomenon described by G. Lukacs is congruent only in part with the phenomenon described by Auerbach. The term 'realism' is justified in Lukacs

by the relation between the representation within the work and nonliterary reality. This is carefully distinguished from particular qualities of representation within the work. These immanent qualities of the representation (repleteness of detail, illusion) are considered as one of the contraries of 'realism' ('naturalism' or 'decadence') if they are not aimed at representing typical characters and situations, while typicality is seen as the condition for representing historical trends, social forces and other 'universals' of human reality.[4]

We may thus conclude - and an examination of specific 'realisms' in the history of the visual arts will buttress this conclusion - that a given historical realism will be assessed as the specific realisation of some universal norms (such as the capability of inspiring 'poetic faith' or of being 'a true representation of general nature'), all drawn from one or both universal meanings of 'realism'.

The discrimination of (historical) realisms will involve quite often a certain combination of the two universal meanings of 'realist'. A representation complete with details might seem more faithful to the external reality it seeks to represent. R. Wellek considers the introduction of descriptions of sex and dying as one of the defining characteristics of modern literary realism.[5] E Auerbach takes a similar view of the introduction of economic and political factors into the literary portrayal of human life. All these may signify not merely a greater completeness in the representation of human reality, but also a truer, because a less idealised, representation. The accumulation of details in a representation makes it more complete - but the completeness of a representation may not of itself make it more true, or, to put it differently, the values of one universal meaning of realism cannot always be translated into the values of another.

Despite the clear dependence of historical realisms on certain universal qualities recognized as 'realistic', it is of course easy to distinguish between them. A reader may judge, for example, the description of old age in *Ecclesiastes*[6] as being more 'realist' than a description of old age as, say, 'a sage and serene envoi to life'. It is clear that this use of 'realist' - taken here in its second universal meaning - has to do with the view one takes of old age, and only indirectly with the poetic presentation of this view. Still it is a legitimate use of the term, even if it has nothing to do with any union of 'stylistic levels' or with the representation of any social or historical types. Another reader may find Homer's description of Pandaros shooting an arrow at Menelaus[7] a very realistic description due to the narrative's patience for detail. Of course Homer's narrative may be offered as a model for a specific

historical 'realism'. But it may also be recognized for the specific qualities of realism (in its first universal meaning), and contrasted with more schematised and formulaic - and therefore less realistic - representations in Homer himself.

The distinction between historical and non-historical 'realism' is cogently illustrated when we judge the representation of reality in work of a certain historical 'realist' style to be less realistic than the representation of that reality in a 'classicist' or a 'romantic' work. One might say, for example, that human wickedness is represented in the classicist drama of Racine more realistically than in Shakespeare. It is not clear what rules of interpretation allow one to see such inventions as Iago or Phaedra as representing *real* human wickedness. But this very latitude of interpretation makes it impossible to prevent the reader from seeing these characters as representative of this more general moral reality, and such a reader may indeed prefer Racine to Shakespeare.

II

The last example can assist us in discriminating not only between historical and universal realisms but also between the two universal realisms themselves. A representation X may be much more lifelike than a representation Y without representing any reality at all or while representing it in a much inferior way. A science fiction novel may create 'aesthetic illusion' but unless we see it wholly or partly as an allegory we do not treat it as a representation of reality; and we see no point in discussing it in terms of the second universal meaning of 'realist'. On the other hand, naive allegory may present us with an image of a social reality which we may accept as 'realistic' yet we shall not find any reason to discuss this representation in terms of lifelikeness. A lifelike representation can represent nothing at all and an abstract symbol may represent reality without resembling it in any way. Iago is presented more 'fully' than Phaedra. We see him in a plurality of actions and situations and in a variety of styles. Phaedra, on the other hand, is more fixed, both dramatically and stylistically. But as soon as we stop considering them as dramatis personae and seeing them as representations of a general 'essence', the richness and multiplicity of their aspects become less important. In this sense the absence of guilt in Iago might discredit him dramatically as too pure and perfect a villain; realism would require a more complex, and hence more faithful, personification of human evil.

The description of novels, plays and paintings as 'realist' usually conflates these two distinct meanings since the paradigmatic cases of realism in literature-such as Tolstoy or Balzac- often involve both meanings. Their work's representations are considered to be both : a) 'lifelike' (vivid or full) and b) accurate

portrayals of a certain milieu or historical moment. Yet we can see from many other uses of 'realist' that its two universal meanings are quite distinct. Critics talk of 'schematic realism' meaning a true representation devoid of details. The author of an essay on pastoral describes it as distinguished by a kind of 'idealisational realism' :8 there is a repleteness of detail in the description of the shepherds' lives, yet surely there exists no shepherd who could answer to these 'realistic' descriptions. 'Dry realism' can be used to designate a representation of reality unclouded by sentiment *or* a generalized representation lacking vividness and colour.

Therefore the number of representations that can be characterized as 'realistic' or 'non-realistic' in each one of the two separate senses is much greater than the number of representations which would plausibly fall under both rubrics. Of realism as repleteness, vividness or illusion we may speak in connection with imaginary landscapes in painting and any other representation which is grasped as purely imaginary. A narrative of an invasion from Mars can - in this sense - be more or less 'realistic'. 'Realism' in its other universal meaning may be attributed to the content of non-artistic communications in much the same way as it is attributed to artistic representations. (A represention that is 'faithful to reality' need not also be a work of art and to be a literary work of art a reapresentation cannot fall only under the second universal meaning of realism.)

'Realist' in its two universal meanings is a comparative and relative term. Representations are 'realist' compared to other actual or possible repsentations, but the comparison is made in the two cases against a different background. The background of 'realist' as lifelike (in any of its submeanings) is always generic. A vivid, full or illusionist representation of X will be judged by a comparison with other representations of X, and by attributing to X in the representation generic qualities : the invaders from Mars will be 'of flesh and blood', the unicorn will act 'like an animal', the devil will be 'real' (that is, he will have the features of things that belong to the recognizable genus of 'real' things). The background of the comparison between different representations of the same reality, which introduces the use of 'realist' in its second sense, will always involve real and particular existence which is seen as reality explicitly or implicitly represented. This reality does not have to be individual from the point of view of ordinary Ontology. It need not be an individual human face or a particular landscape. It may very well be the Russian nobility of the nineteenth century, or British society, or youth, or even 'the human condition'.

'Resemblance to reality' or 'verisimilitude' is usually invoked in popular discussions of paintings, films and fiction. We can always ascertain the sense of realism meant in such discussions by asking the question : 'Resembling what ?' When the answer is given in generic terms- resembling a big city, a marriage or even 'reality' - we use 'realist' in its first sense. Only when we conceive resemblance to be related to a particular real existence which may in principle be known outside the series of artistic or fictional representations we use 'realist' in its second sense. In the discussion of a specific representation it is, therefore, possible to move from one sense of 'realism' to the other by introducing the assumption that some actual reality is being represented. The portrait will then be discussed not only in terms of 'truth' or 'faithfulness to reality'. Even science fiction is amenable to such a move, once we are ready to consider it as wholly or partially an allegory or some other indirect description of real things.

It is therefore impossible to discuss in pure artistic terms the 'realism' of representations in the last sense, since such a discussion will always involve prior beliefs about reality.

III

We may now categorize various artistic representations in terms of the relations or tensions created in them by the presence or absence of the qualities of these two 'realisms'. There are in theory four possibilities, all of which are realized in literature, cinema or drama.

There is, first, the possibility that a representation will be very lacking in lifelikeness, and in this sense, 'unrealistic'. Such a representation will be very schematic or its verisimilitude will have been discredited. It will therefore exclude any possibility of 'poetic faith' or illusion. Its mimetic deficiencies will nevertheless point up its intention to represent 'realistically' some aspects of reality.

This is the case with fables - such as those in which animals are made to speak, but for the sake of faithfully conveying actual characteristics of moral life - and with pure or naive allegories. When fables are not explicitly concluded with a moral - and allegories do not include in their text rules or instructions for allegorical interpretation - it is precisely their deficiencies as lifelike representations which drive us to interpret them in terms of the moral, psychological or social reality represented. On the other hand, as the representation tends towards lifelikeness the risk grows that the represented world will be

mistaken for a self-sufficient, and autonomous "poetic world" and the greater will be the need for explicitness, either of the fable's proverb or the allegory's rules for interpretation.

The second possibility is the symmetrical opposite of the first one. The representation will be mimetically rich, as in the farce, or situationally vivid, as in the joke. Yet it will not be 'serious' : the paradigmatic elements of the representation - the story and the characters - will lack logic, consistency or plausibility, and the problem or the conflict will be sharply revealed as spurious.[9] The tension derived from the expectation for a genuine resolution will be released at one stroke (in the joke) or will be gradually dissolved (in the farce) by the persistent contradiction between the visual life-likeness of the image and the implausibilities or absurdity of the chain of events. That is how jokes formulating in their story familiar or clear-cut problems, and cinematic farces - such as Buster Keaton's - presenting the spectator with splendid visual 'realistic' images on the screen, carry the extreme lifelikeness of their representation to a point where it may no longer be taken as a model of any *reality*. In doing so they rely heavily on the frustration of expectations formed in the reader, listener or spectator by 'serious' fiction. Those who view fiction as parasitic on real speech-act map consider these non-serious fictions as parasites of parasites.[10]

The second pair of possible relations between the two different qualities of realism in the artistic representation aim at balance rather than tension. This pair consists of a) the explicit representations of reality in non-fictional works of literature (memoirs, histories) insofar as they aspire to aesthetic values such as vividness or lifelikeness and b) works of fiction insofar as they aspire to contain cognitive 'implied truths', or any kind of serious speech act.[11]

The issue here is the equilibrium of aesthetic and cognitive values in works which aspire to both - and therefore not included are memoirs and histories which are mere protocols of events, and hence of only informational value, as well as works of fiction that do not intend to communicate or imply truths about reality. What distinguishes the two kinds of works is fictionality; the sentences of a memoir or a history *refer*, the sentences in a work of pure fiction do not (except, perhaps, to fictional entities). But the sheer distinction between fictionality and non-fictionality does not warrant the classification of works according to the dominance of the aesthetic function over the cognitive function or vice-versa.[12] Such a procedure of classification would be imprecise because the dominance of a function in a multifunctional work is bestowed upon the work by the reader. It is reading which fixes the hierarchy of functions or values

in the text by bringing a group of elements or qualities to the foreground of its attention while allowing other groups to recede to the background. And here every work permits in principle two kinds of readings, 'cognitive' and 'aesthetic': the novel may be read for the ethnographic or historical information it provides and the memoir or history may be read for the aesthetic pleasure of its vivid portrayals of characters and events. It should be observed that the aesthetic values of which we speak have to do not with felicities of style, but rather with qualities of the representation. For this reason not every artistic non-fiction belongs here.

A more proper procedure of classification would discriminate the avowed points of departure of the two kinds of works; what matters is the tradition of writing from which they set out, and not so much the value-realiations within them.

Yet it is important to remember that it is nonetheless always legitimate for the critic to assess both the veracity or vividness of the representation in a work of these two kinds, no matter how they are read; which is to say that in the case of a work aspiring to both cognitive and aesthetic values 'realism' in both senses can be predicated of 'the work itself' over and above the various readings it may receive.

Unlike allegory and farce which are polar opposites, the relation between a memoir which is rich with aesthetic values and pure fiction whose "world" may be taken as a model of some non-fictional aspect of life, is a binary one. We may speak of a continuum ranging from memoir or history to pure fiction. The *roman a clef*, the fictional temoignage (e.g. one Day in the Life of Iven Denisovitch), find their place on this axis. Yet their place in this continuum - easily defined by the degree of their fictionality - tells us nothing about the extent of the representation of reality (cognitive values) contained in them. Fictionality and degrees of fictionality may be determined by the number of sentences in the text which refer outside (i.e. to independently existing entities) and by the centrality of these sentences to the poetic world created by the text.[13] Yet it is clear, however, that any fantastic work may contain explicit references to existing events, institutions and people without losing its fantastic character, while a purely fictional story may offer a model for the understanding of some real aspect of life thereby becoming a 'realistic' story (in the second universal meaning of 'realistic').[14]

The capacity to represent reality may be built into the supralinguistic qualities of the poetic world and lack any direct connection with the logical and semantic status of the individual sentences of the text. In this case it

will have to do with our recognition of the existence of resemblances between fictional persons and types and prototypes of reality. Such a recognition may bring us to the conclusion that the fictional poetic world *represents* (in the strong, referential, sense of this word) some non-fictional event, person, institution or social structure. In the same way the purely imaginary character of a poetic world may also be recognized by the qualities of the representation and not by the amount of non-referential sentences in the text from which it was constructed.

As there is no such thing as a 'non-figurative' or 'abstract' literature[15] a verbal description or a poetic world is always taken by the readers to be more - or less - or not at all - realistic in the two different universal meanings of the term.

Any literary work involves, therefore, a tension between the two different qualities of realism and enables a constant play in which a work may move from serious fiction to farce, or from the mode of pure farce to a more serious speech-act. It is here, I believe, that recognition of the four possibilities of relations between the two different kinds of 'realism' may be of value both to literary theory and to the interpretation and evaluation of specific text.

Notes & References

1. The distinction between 'illusion in this sense and 'delusion' was insisted on by J.S. Mill and is central to E.H. Gombrich's *Art and Illusion* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1960). See also M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 323-25) and M. Brinker, 'Aesthetic Illusion,' *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 36, 1977, no.2. pp. 191-96.
2. I cannot deal here with the important problem of conventions in representation and their relation to the problems of realism. This is discussed in my paper "Conventions, Realism and Beliefs," forthcoming in *New Literary History*. However, I must add this :

   The opposition between a'natural' representation (minimizing, motivating or disguising the use of literary and artistic conventions) and the consciously 'artistic' representation has to do with the illusion of resemblance to reality mentioned above. It has usually very little to do with the arguments for (or

against) seeing a certain representation as realistic in the third meaning of the term. It may, however, be fruitfully linked to disputes about 'faithfulness to reality' once ideologies are introduced to defend or to attack certain modes of representation. Such ideologies will assume the existence of absolutely 'true' or 'correct' modes of representation, and will shift the discussion to the third meaning of realism insofar as they will justify their literary *in* and artistic preferences with a prior conception of the represented reality.

3. E. Auerbach, *Mimesis, The Reprsentation of Reality in Western Literature*, tr. W.R. Trask, Princeton, 1953, pp. 554-55.
4. See especially G. Lukacs, "Erzählen order Beschreiben," in *Probleme des Realismus*, Aufbarr-Verlag, Berlin, 1955, pp. 103-45; and *Realism in our Time*, Harper Torchbooks, 1964, esp. pp. 42-44, 119-21.
5. R. Wellek, "The Concept of Realism in Literary Scholarship", in *Concepts of Criticism*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1963, p. 241.
6. *Ecclesiastes*, 12 : 1-5.
7. The *Iliad*, Book IV, lines 102-32, tr. R. Lattimore, University of Chicago press, 1962, p. 116.
8. P V. Marinelli, *Pastoral*, Methuen, London, 1971.
9. See, for example, Kant's analysis of the joke in *Critique of Judgment*, tr. J. Meredith, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1973 p, 199.
10. I have in mind here J. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1962 p. 104; and J. Searle, "The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse", *New Literary History*,6 (1975),
11. I employ here the formulations of the cognitive value of fiction proposed by J. Hospers in his "Implied Truths in Literature". *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 19, 1 (Fall, 1960), pp. 37-46; and the article by J. Searle mentioned above.
12. This has been suggested by some essays of the Czech structuralist, Jon Mukorovsky; see especially *Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts*, tr. M.E. Suino, Ann Arbor, 1970.
13. For the definition of fiction mentioned here, see, for example, M.C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics, Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958, pp. 411-14, 441-43.
14. J. Searle, in the essay mentioned above, defines fictional discourse by the non-referentiality of its sentences: he suggests that degree of fictionality will correspond with the extent of fictional discourse in a given work. But he confuses

degrees of fictionality with degrees of representation of reality when he says that "in the case of realistic or naturalistic fiction, *the author will refer to real places and events* intermingling these references with the fictional references, thus making it possible to treat the fictional story as an extension of our existing knowledge" (p. 331). Real reference (reference to existing people or events) is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for the *representation* of *real* events and people.

15. This limits the value of the analogy between 'abstract units' in the visual arts and in literature proposed by N. Frye (*Anatomy of Criticism*, Athenaeum, New York, 1968, pp. 131-40)

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It's Funny, the Truth Is . . .

LARS AAGAARD-MOGENSEN

When we say and many frequently say 'It's funny, the truth is ...' in prefix of *what* they want to say, it seems to suggest that the truth isn't funny. And it isn't. It isn't true ? Well, that can't be the whole truth. Nonetheless the contrast between humor and truth set up pointedly before us by this expression is not expendable. Truth and fun do contrast in interesting ways, in fact in many many ways (only too few of which I can get to here). At least it was Earl Shaftesbury's contention : fun is capable of sorting out what is true from what is not true, - not in the lab of course, but mostly in common talk where people say things they know nothing about as if it were true. But, you will object, people don't do that much.

I think he's right they do, quite often. There's plenty of guessing assuming presuming hypothesizing planning hoping ordering around in the world - in one word, theories - all leaving equally ample opportunity for humor to sort the loose from the straight talk. Straight talk is Okay. Quite reasonably, nothing out of the ordinary, we ask of others and (sometimes) ourselves that we can say what it is we talk about. And we usually can. If you can't, you'll be told to shut up. This something we talk about is of course not just something we say and what we say it is, consequently, cannot be said to be in reality in precisely the same way as it itself is. In short, talk is about something: somethings aren't about anything.

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Mostly when we don't know what we talk about, but don't stop - and I don't know what it takes to stop us - we start theorizing. When you start what you say with 'theoretically speaking' you disregard how you know things are and talk about them as if you knew what you don't know about them; if your start is 'practically speaking' you disregard how you know things are not, That juncture is where what you say can go wrong one way - and where theories surely often do go wrong.

Talk is generally discarded after its purpose is served, it's disposable you might say; theories - though some seem to loathe to let go of some of them- are discarded too, as soon, and not soon enough, as the facts of the matter are in Reality can easily knock-out theories - then they cease being theories, they become follies of the past. First discarded are of course false theories - very few would dispute that; it happens to the worst theories first (we hope), eventually to them all. Unless yon set your heart and head on pure theoretical truth, they are no longer worth your salt, aren't really anything that can sustain talk about anything at all, and we're left in reality.

Theories are about, too. They are not about things as much as they are about what someone thinks he doesn't know (if he did know, he'd have no reason to ignore his ignorance). Who, anyways, would accept a theory about something in places where he can say what's the case ?

You see there is then a gap between talk and theory, much as there is between talks and things. Thinking and particularly philosophical thinking, I think philosophically, is the activity of probing into the noman's land between things and talk, tresspassing, you may well call it, on reality - for the sake of getting talk closer to real things.[1] This is where insight and discovery is to be had; so I say Avant ! toward the rugged grounds where talk has some traction.

Some advocate that philosophy should make new theories - and I agree there's absolutely nothing philosophy mustn't do. But it mainly is headed for truth, or in other accurate words, it is aimed at getting rid of theories. Theories and theoretical truths are mere surrogates. Not the theoretical but the real of matters must be sought in order to know that which really *is* true. And, as I said, there's plenty of good use for humor in that search.

Even the good uses have complexities, - none, however, that upsets the simple corporate dialectics between truth and fun. 'To tell the truth' can be rewarding; if you can't tell the truth (from the rest) chances are that you're a pretty peculiar fellow - the funny one around your woods. The truth, only the truth, isn't (always) funny.[2] Nothing but the truth is seldom great fun.

The whole truth must be pretty delightful; it would be crisp and great to have. It's seldom given, though. We may meanwhile also take it, the basic contrast, in a much more direct way, i.e. that is funny which is not true; there's something ridiculous, laughable, or amusing about being in the wrong. And the silliness of righteousness gently underscores that. So, we can find out what is false by applying a fair dose of ridicule, - if it works, we're right; if it doesn't, we've got it too. Perhaps you can have truth without having some truth, too.

Expectedly, the obverse expression, 'That's not funny, it's the (plain, painful, discouraging) truth', leans toward the same point. When you become the subject of ridicule undeservedly, as we say, it is offensive, not because it doesn't amuse, but because unjustly so. The hint is right, justice enters the good laugh.[3] When it's no fun because true, your "it" will stand up; lay it before your scoffers and they'll, perhaps (not) a bit embarrassed, realize how rude they were - but you see here their rudeness depends on what you can muster by way of facts; the more rare or outrageous your story is the less you can expect they'll ever realize their mischief (e.g. cases in point are the typical sportsfishermen's stories: Should you pull out the snapshot of your 80 pound salmon, their grins disappear and legend you become instantly; but only incontrovertible fact shall accomplish that for you). To get into the clear, to strip grins off faces, only reality is needed. The modesty imposed on you, quite voluntarily, by the risk of becoming legendary phony is as high a proof as you're likely to get from eating any rumpudding that reason and laughs do corporate. Exercise of good sense and bright wit solicits no ridicule and holds off potential victimization.

Even if not nearly exhausted I wish not to get stuck with intricacies of the expression "It's funny, the truth is...."; enough of a clue is provided of more matters of the truthtelling smile.

I suppose you know the old little story about joke's provenance, the story of stories, the true one; so, I'll tell it again : McErnest enjoys jokes a lot, enjoys hearing them, enjoys telling them. Nothing escapes his keen observation, so he notes what he hears and tells, but never told one he hadn't heard. Knowing first hand from his own case suggests itself to McErnest that so do everybody else; obviously this is the way jokes get around; checking with a few of his nitwit friends squarely confirms his theory. Sharp of mind as he is, it delivers the problem : where on earth do they come from ? But that's it, it comes to McErnest, the sweet (theoretical) solution is that it must

be extraterrestrials who "plant" jokes among us earthlings; why would they do a thing like that ? Surely not to entertain us, nay, it must be in order to test us out to see if we're ready for intelligent contact. That's it, as long as we have a laugh at the funny, at any thing at all, we're too barbaric for serious business with higher intelligence.[4] (McErnest blushes, more than slightly embarrassed, over his prior joyous embracement of plain fun).

Again, the happy corporate contrast brings out the truth in point. And its point is that the purpose of joking could hardly be worse misunderstood, misrepresented, or disfigured, (that's where whatever fun it contains spring). Nothing could be more wrong, could it ? The fact is that only a barbarian cannot enjoy a fine joke appropriately; he'll miss the clue, he'll insist on taking it all dead seriously, believe it, act on it, etc., witness the practical joke works best on disciplined, principled, dull, or square people; they practically invite them).

The most telling corroboration of the contrast just brought out between intelligenee and barbarism in virtue of humor is that it is shrillingly absurd to claim a right to be ridiculous. One can and many do claim a right to a good many things, e.g. a right to free action, to absence of pain, or to certain degrees of health and welfare; but one cannot sensibly claim a right to be ridiculous - that is as nonsensical as to claim a right to be stupid, to be ignorant, or to be ugly.

Most people tend to overlook the close corporation of fun and reality, - they blindly see fun as freewheeling, as detached from daily and social life. Often some - wise guys - say it's childish. They are wrong. There's nothing childish about it, except that it's adultish to dismiss it so. Shaftesbury got it right meanwhile if I'm right that his main insight is : that which can be shown only in a certain light is questionable.[5] [So much for Contextualisms.] Truths bear all lights, and one of the Principal lights (or natural means) by which things are to be viewed in order to advance recognition is ridicule or that manner of proof by which we discern whatever is liable to just raillery in any subject. (44) For wit is its own remedy. Without wit and humor reason can hardly have its proof or be distinguished. (52)

Perhaps the term 'proof' is entirely misleading here (given our rigorously singular preference for proofs), the point however is that if truth had in any way been surmountable (22) also fun can do it; the fault is we carry the laugh but half-way. (56) Never retreat, even if the wrong bites, for he who laughs and is himself ridiculous, bears, a double share of ridicule; (57) but a mannerly wit can hurt no cause or interest for which I am in the least concerned; (65)

so, one should never decline wit, but willingly commit one's cause to this test, and try it against the sharpness of any ridicule which might be offered. (23)

In the second place it is equally true that we cannot possibly make a jest of honesty; to laugh both ways is nonsersical, (86) and I should think myself very ridiculous to be angry with anyone for thinking me dishonest if I could give no cogent account of my honesty nor show how I differed from a knave. (69) Genuine fun and laughter disallow replication; should you from time to time succeed in deceiving a few, *you'll* know. In other words, the gravest gentlemen and, for that matter, women, even in the gravest subjects and in their gravest arguments, we should have no scruple to ask : Is it not ridiculous ? (44) which is to say that it always remains an *open question* whether the things we say in all seriousness (itself conducive to misbelief) will collapse in the face of reason's ridicule. Fun will have the better of falsehood. No amount of serious reasons for a view or statement eclipses the question : Is it not ridiculous ?

We can very well imagine, Shaftesbury continues, that men may be frightened out of their wits (e.g. by threat, ideology, gloom and gravity, etc.), but we have no apprehension they should be laughed out of them. (65) Some truths are so evident in themselves, that it would be easier to imagine half mankind to have run mad, and joined in one and the same species of folly, than to admit anything as truth which should be advanced against common sense. (97)

The peculiar power of ridicule is further fixed by its close affiliation with thinking (at its best). Shaftesbury willingly allows that to pass for philosophy which by any real effects is proved capable to refine our spirits, improve our understandings, or mend our manners. By contrast, if philosophical speculation goes besides the mark and reaches nothing we can truly call our interest or concern, it must be somewhat worse than mere ignorance or idiotism. The most ingenious way of becoming foolish is by a system. And the surest method to prevent good sense is to set up something in its place. The closer anything is to wisdom, if it be not plainly the thing itself, the more directly it becomes its opposite. ' 189) Even logic is beat.

It is not wrong to bring philosophy into the picture. Philosophy, most agree, is a kind, perhaps the foremost kind of thinking, the use of reason, which cannot be distinguished without wit and humor. Neither of which, i.e. neither a mannerly wit nor philosophical speculations politely managed, surely can ever render mankind more unsociable or uncivilized. (65) And both aim at truth. No

doubt about it. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, (lll), Wittgenstein remarked "Let us ask ourselves : why do we feel a grammatical joke to be deep ? (And that is what the depth of Philosophy is)," a remark I think we cash in on here.

I'm not out to make sense of this sort of "proof" (to which Shaftesbury alludes). Sense you make of something which hasn't any, and fun you make of something pretending to have sense - hence the abortive scream is reward for explication of jokes. (So often making sense of a philosophical argument is making fun of it - that gives you the truth of the matter). Explanations, excuses, and explications cannot salvage nor adorn intelligence if it stands up to being made fun of. It is worth keeping (for a while at least) if fun is shot at it and is repelled (try they as best they can).

Hans Christian Andersen, my fellow country man, is ascribed the proverbial statement that he who takes the serious only seriously and the humorous only humorously has understood everything only very poorly. I do not know whether he knew Aristotle, but he surely must have been on to the Aristotelian insight Shaftesbury supportingly puts this way : Humor is the only test of gravity, and gravity of humor. For a subject which would not bear raillery is suspicious; and a jest which would not bear serious examination is certainly false wit. In argument and conversation oue should meet serious pleading with humor, and humor with serious pleading. (52n) So I'm tempted to supplement Shaftesbury's argument a bit, capturing perhaps the spirit of Aristotle's and Wittgenstein's sensibility, not to mention my own - which it after all all is, - to supply a yet clearer grasp of how and why humor conveys insight, has cognitive power.

Permit me to bring in one of my favorite analogies, *viz.* between the smashing aptness of metaphors and jokes alike. The joke, as well as the metaphor, easily overcomes the cognitive malpractice of the winded narrative and the twisted tale, (which are immediate waste : again, if you have to explicate your joke, the joke is shy of insight). Jokes are short, sharp, and shining. The metaphor delivers insight in a way similar to the way we know from the good joke : sudden and with no concealment. Its punch-line is an eye-opener, with a swift swirl. Suppose you consider a one-liner, that has been used and misused by countless producers of anything at all : "If you have enjoyed this (performance, etc.) half as much as we have (enjoyed ourselves making it), we have enjoyed it twice as much as you have," and you see that one virtue, a cognitive one at that, of the joke is that it sets you up such that you cannot not grasp the insight offered and receiving insight in this way is fun (which is

why the rare (?) occasions when you miss the point are so offending to your intelligence), and fun it certainly is if you compare it to the sweat and tears of the traditional classroom manner of conveyance. The shared humor of it gives away that you got the point. The humorous joke (much as the metaphor creates a meaning) conceives, carries, conveys insight, and cripples misunderstanding (lack of sense of humor does indeed handicap its victims). Even the ones that aren't about anything, at least if they are any good, contain that conceptual clasp.

Let me close with a few examples I think have got it, starting on the lead from Wittgenstein, - the conceptual jokes, which demonstrate that, even if what is punned is not reality, truth is carried. Suppose someone says "All men would be cowards if they dared", and you see this is equivalent to saying "It is true that all men would be cowards if they dared." More clearly you can't want any true insight. It can be fun for its own sake, as we say not quite accurately, because it almost never is for its own sake but for the shared end of reasoning together, making minds meet.[6] The verbal plays, the funny ones, the sarcastic ones, the ironic ones, the satirical ones, the satirical oues, etc., but particularly the well tempered ones all demonstrate a grasp of concepts (most likely as firm or firmer a grasp as it takes to hold on to a paradox); it takes a sharp intellect, a generous imagination, and a zest for life, comparable only to the creative scientists, artists and philosophers. Quite plainly the word-play trades on the same conceptual copulation, e.g, "its astonishing how our view of age changes with age," or even briefer "the waterproof teabag."[7] Fortunately we can gradually bring the unbeatable conceptual content much closer to reality : How is this for a waste of time : First we teach children to talk - later we try in vain to teach them to shut up. Learned men of all nations and hat sizes compete to create and deploy such insights at the right time. Lord Russell is said to have said some such thing as that "our magnificent democracies are still inclined to think, that an unintelligent man is more honest than a clever man, and our politicians cash in the benefit of this prejudice by acting as if they were even more unintelligent than they are by birth," (little wonder the political caricature is a strong grown genre).

But let me not join the distributors and petty retailers of wit, which must raise to and on the proper occasion, - leave McErnest to his puzzle, - so, I'm not saying that humor can't do many many other things (obviously it amuses, entertains, relieves, etc.). But I'm going to firmly insist, with Shaftesbury, that whatever else it does, genuine humor thrives in close encounter with honesty and truth, while gravity predates on pretense and falsity. So it is funny

that the truth about truth is that fun can bring it out. I now fade out with a motto an insightful writer chose :

> This poor old world works hard and gets no richer; thinks hard and gets no wiser; worries much and gets no happier. It casts off old errors to take on new ones; laughs at ancient superstitions and shivers over modern ones. It is best but a Garden of Folly, whose chattering joke gardeners move a moment among the flowers, waiting for the sunset.

(And with a side-glance to the McErnests among us, he credits this wisdom thus : Confucious, or Tutankhamen- I forget which).

Notes and References

1. "Anpassung von Begriffen an Qualitäten", *Zaitschrift für Ästh.tik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, 1 83.
2. And crude people, so the suggestion of this of course is, are dead sure that the/some others do *desereve* it. Innocence is in fact ridiculously hard to come by if you ask around unreflected people.
3. There's something exhillaratingly healthy about humor (if I'm right it thrives on its opposition to absurdity) which parallels, conceptually speaking, the fact that freedom gets its meaning from the possible restraints it might be subjected to (see "Freedom of Information", forth-coming); humor grasps its sense, and sense it has, (you don't have to make it), from absurdity's washings off.
4. A neat about this story is its outright admission that it takes invention to produce a joke; thereby in the characteristic fashion of the funny shows forth an incomplete concept of intelligence.
5. I endorse the following notes on truth; however, they are virtually quotations of Shaftesbury, at least of the relatively features I bend to my ends; not bent enough to misrepresent his views which are found in *Charcteristics*, ed. J.M. Robertson, Indianapolis 1964, to pages of which the in text scattered numbers refer.
6. Cf. 'Exploratory Conversation' section in "Real Art and Constructed Reality", *Restant* 8, no 2 (1980) : 235-249.
7. Which, notice, differ greatly from the learned's habit of quoting, where fun is as rare as in architecture, ("Quotation and Common Sense", *Worldmakings' Ways*, Gent 1982).

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"Cordelia : Shakespeare's Metaphor for 'Nature' and 'Grace' "

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Chaucer thought of Nature as a kindly Queen, motherly Dame. Since the mid-nineteenth century, we have come to think of Nature as a cruel and dangerously explosible force. The orthodox Elizabethans, for the most part, are nearer to the Chaucerian view. For us Nature is a source of raw power which we can use. For the Elizabethans, on the other hand, Nature was an ordered and beautiful pattern to which we must adjust ourselves.

Where we study Nature in order to exploit it, Bacon and Hooker study her in order to discover their duties and think not of our controlling her but of allowing her to control us. The idea of Nature, then in orthodox Elizabethan thought is always normative for human beings. It is impossible to talk about Nature without talking about pattern and ideal form, about Reason as displayed in Nature, about Law as the innermost expression of Nature, about Custom which is the basis of Law and equally with Law an expression of Nature's pattern, about Restraint as the observances of Law, and the way to reveal our richest self - fulfilment.

In the sixteenth century, the forces which have produced our view of Nature were, of course, already at work. *King Lear* finds room in its world for the Nature, which is no longer Kindly Dame but the shattering power of

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Thunder. The orthodox and benign view is also strongly represented. The purpose of this paper is to examine "Cordella : Shakespeare's metaphor for 'Nature' and 'grace' ". Lear does not take the ingratitude as an offence against himself. It is a violation of Nature :

> O, reason not the need ! Our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
> Allow not Nature more than Nature needs -
> Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
> If only to give warm were gorgeous,
> Why, Nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
> Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But for true need,
> You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need !1 (II, iv, 259 - 266)

Lear's exasperated reply to the argument is in complete accord with Hooker's. Patience is of all things the most necessary to a man tried as he is. Patience is the "precious pearl" prophylactic against the moral sin of forsaking Grace and falling into wrath.

Professor Bradley' calls".... *King Lear* Shakespeare's greatest achievement", but, as he further says, "it seems to me not his best play "[2] I mean to say that *King Lear* is greater than any of the mature plays - *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Macbeth* and the fullest revelation of Shakespeare's power like the *Divine Comedy*. Though the character of Cordelia is not a master - piece of invention or subtlety like that of Cleopatra, yet in its own way, it is a creation as wonderful. Cordelia appears in only four (I, i; IV, iv; IV, vii; V, iii) of the twenty six scenes of *King Lear* - in about a hundred lines. And yet no character in Shakespeare is more absolutely individual, fully integrated or more inefficiently stamped on the memory of the audience. The infinite wealth and beauty conveyed by the very refusal to reveal this beauty in expansive speech is obliquely suggested. The blend of natural sweetness and supernatural "grace" is here achieved in an amplitude of reference which gathers its component images into a single triumphant effect.

Cordelia retires in the end, "with victory and felicity". To die is so exceedingly "uncomfortablye", to live, and be a happy wife is so eminently satisfactory. Shakespeare introduces into the world no little ethical code. Such a little ethical code would flutter away in tatters across the tempest and the night of Lear's agony. And Shakespeare discovers the lofty, supreme fact - that the moral world stands in sovereign indedpendence of the world of senses. Cordelia lies upon the breast of Lear. "Upon such sacrifices the Gods themselves throw

incense". Cordelia, forgetting her father might have returned to France, and have lived prosperously, but then, the pure zeal of redeeming ardour, would indeed have ceased to be. She has fulfilled the end of her being. Cordelia had accepted he lot with fortitude.

> We are not the first
> Who with best meaning have incurred the worst
> For thee, oppressed King, I am cast down;
> Myself could else out - frown false Fortune's frown.
> Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters ? (V, iii, 4 - 7)

To understand Cordelia is to understand the whole play. According to Coleridge, "There is something of disgust at the ruthless hypocrisy of her sisters, and some little faulty admixture of pride and sullenness in Cordelia's 'Nothing' " (I, i, 87), who would like to "Love and be silent" (I, i, 62). Her virtues join with her father's faults and her sisters' wickedness to make her "nothing" - both inevitable and right.

Cordelia's answer, 'nothing', signifies her intense torment that almost devastatingly paralyses her will which not uncommonly grips a young and emotional girl when she is forced to exhibit her loyalty in public but is also a shocking wound that the parents so often inflict on their children through sheer pride and the reaction or consequence is usually fierce, cruel and incomprehensible. Since the love of Cordelia for her foolish old father is deep, sacred and inexpressible, she cannot exhibit it before a court or her sneering sisters. This paralysis of the will is a terrifying experience.

And like Edmund, Cordelia is not a complex character. She is a compelling picture of young girl - as compelling in her way as Chaucer's Griselde is in the framework of medieval allegory, and acquires meaning beyond expression. Cordelia embodies both "grace" and nature which Edmund denies to exist, and which Lear, though he believes in it, cannot realise when it is before him.

By this it does not mean that Cordelia ceases to be a woman, since the Nature she stands for is essentially human and requires incarnation. This necessitates perfection not only in an individual, but perfection in the community also. That is, Cordelia does not stand for individual sanity without at the same time stauding for rightness in relation of man to man - social sanity. In so far as the goodman is necessarily in relation to a bad society - the ideal community Cordelia implies will be a non-existent one. If we call it a Utopia, if we call what we can call it, as the evangelicals and the apocalyptics did,

Jerusalem. Art, like an ethical action, is utopian in intention. Cordelia expresses the utopian intention of Shakespeare's art[3]. Cordelia is a blend of gentleness and toughness - something in the grain of Shakespeare's own nature had. We think of him in his tragic period as a tough - minded man. Like Wordsworth's Lucy, Cordelia stands for Shakespeare's virtue, a metaphor for full woman, and Shakespeare integrated her personality in accordance with the contemporary traditional morality. In the mouths of critics since Coleridge she has been "simple truth miscall'd simplicity." The line from the Sonnet could serve as text, for her rehabilitation. A hundred years' tradition has found fault with Cordelia's action in the first scene.

The source of the accusation of 'pride' is Lear himself, the first person to insist that Cordelia was wrong. "Let pride", he says, "which she calls plainness, marry her" (I, i, 129). Twenty lines later, Kent picks up the word "plainness", and retorts :

> When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man ?
> Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
> When power to flattery bows ? To plainness honour's bound,
> When majesty stoops to folly .... (I, i 146 - 49)

Lear counter - replies to Kent for the accusation of 'pride' : "....thou hast sought to make us break our vow,/which we durst never yet, and, with strained pride,/To come betuixt our sentence and our power,/Which nor our nature nor our place can bear". (I, i 168 - 71).

With complete courage, complete clear - headedness, and implicit confidence both in herself and in the 'simple truth', Cordelia holds out her pose against her father and stands a part from her sisters. In the opening scene of the first act, her toughness becomes inseparable and indistinguishable from her gentleness who as her duties and fulfilment of normal instinct loved her father according to the claim of her 'bond' :

> I love your Majesty
> According to my bond, no more nor less (I, i, 92 - 3)

For Lear, according to critics after Johnson, 'bond' rings with a dead note. From the standpoint of the Renaissance prince, too, a 'bond' was not always a binding thing. With the emergency of the period of financial stress, 'bond' began to imply an obligation to pay when reputed by invoking the use of law of nature. As for the Middle Ages and for Cordelia, it means, "I love you as every normal girl loves her father - naturally !" 'Bond' implies both the inclusive scheme of natural law, which king as Citizens can violate

and the absolute claim to full and total obedience. As Cordelia is called on to say :

Good my Lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me.
I return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all ? Happily when I shall wed,
That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all. (I, i, 95 - 104)

Cordelia's "obey you, love you ...." implies the marriage - vow she reminds her married sisters of in the lines immediately following.

Lear should be the first to appreciate her point of view. Cordelia's wooers are awaiting her outside, with her share of kingdom, intended to be dowry. And Cordelia's exposition of her prayer is lost on Lear as her use of the ambiguous 'bond'. Lear, fallen biased of Nature, is dead to the meaning of the traditional belief. The concept, that Cordelia is proud, grows up as a consequence of the dissolution of the notion of nature as understood in the Middle Ages and also in the orthodox thought of the sixteenth century.

And 'bond' Cordelia claims may be said to represent the spirit of reasonable control which Lear's royal status should imply; in Goneril and Regan the passions lurking in the darker recesses of his undifferentiated humanity are given independent life and logical consistency. For Coleridge, "Shakespeare was the most philosophical of the poets."[4] In all Shakespeare's work character as such must be subordinated to the idea to ensure, "the organic coherence of the whole". This idea, in *King Lear*, is the idea of nature. As Bradley said, "character is destiny", he meant to say that character's motives are a product of heredity and environment. Shakespeare did not operate on the assumption that story was explicable as what people did and that what people did was a result of what people were and that what people were could be exhibited by their motives.

Cordelia impresses us right from the very outset as a character of 'unmingled tenderness and strength'. She is "whom Nature is ashamed/Almost t'acknowledge hers" (I, i, 212 - 13) and 'she is herself a dowry; as France counters :

Fairest Cordelia, thou art most rich, being poor,
Most choice, forsaken, and most loved, despised,
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon.
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away. (I, i, 250 - 3)

Cordelia is the other aspect of 'nature' Edmund, Goneril, and Regan ignore. Like Dante's Beatrice, to us and to the Gentleman in Act IV, VI. she was King Lear's daughter, "who redeems Nature from the general curse/ Which twain have brought her to" (IV, vi, 206 - 7). The twain referred to herein are not Goneril and Regan but Adam and Eve.

Critics have called Cordelia's 'pride' in the first scene merely the Dantesque 'selfishness' framed in Nature and reason.[5] She acts in a situation where her father and her sisters act otherwise. Cordelia's invasion of Britain is simply the beginning of righteousness, firm, unconfused and quietly assured, and in Cordelia's terms, "preparation stands/In expectation of them" (IV, iv, 23 - 4). She seems to reconcile Coleridgean contraries - she is both passion and order, innocence and maturity, defencelessness and strength, daughter and mother, maid and wife. Apparently, the proud isolation of Cordelia in the first scene is only one aspect of " the proper love of myself " and the other aspect of the central unity is her compassionate move to redeem the state and restore her father.

The Gentleman (in Act IV, iii) describes Cordelia on being asked by Kent :

Did your letter pierce the Queen to any demonstration of grief ?

Gentleman : Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence,
And now and then an ample tear trilled down
Her delicate cheek. It seemed she was a Queen
Over her passion who, most rebel - like,
Sought to be King o'er her.

Kent : O, then it moved her ?

Gentleman : Not to a rage; patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest, you have seen
Sun - shine and rain at once; her smiles and tears
Were like a better way; those happy smilets
That played on her ripe lip seem not to know
What guests were in her eyes which parted thence.
As pearils from diamonds dropped. In brief,
Sor.ow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.

Kent : Made she no verbal question ?

Gentleman : Faith, once or twice she heaved the name of father
Pantingly forth, as if it pressed her heart,
Cried 'Sisters ! Sisters ! Shame of Ladies ! Sisters !
Kent ! Father ! Sisters !' - What, i' the storm ? i' the night ?

Let pity not be believed ! There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moistened, then away she started,
To deal with grief alone. (IV, iii, 9 - 32)

We see Cordelia as a short of beneficent Goddess of Nature, whose tears can quicken the "unpublished virtues of the earth" and "remediate in....man's distress" (IV, iv, 17 - 18).

Nature is seen here as womanhood of Cordelia in her tears and smile as moistened air, April sunshine and rain. She had her control of passion like "a Queen over her passion" who "most rebel - like sought to be King o'er her" (IV, 1 ii). Her feelings are loyal servants running eagerly to her will - but always to bring out her beauty and queenliness of state "....patience and sorrow strove/Who should express her goodliest" Cordelia constituted the apex of the pyramid that is humanity, "soul in bliss" (IV, VII) as Lear himself acknowledged her. She, as the Gentleman, says to Lear, "redeems nature from the general curse/Which twain have brought her to" (IV, VI, 205 - 6). She in her integrity is "the better way" and her feelings and thoughts like smiles and tears, are snapped strands of that "way". On the contrary, as Albany says of Goneril :

O Goneril,
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition :
That nature which contemns its origin
Cannot be bordered certain in itself . (IV, ii, 30 - 34)

Goneril is one who "contemns its origin". She flouts and rejects the axiom that 'everyman is naturally friendly to everyman'. She, like a branch violently tearing herself away from the tree, is Nature - its withering aspect turning poisonous, and her action like that of the river overflowing its banks- formless and destinctive. Shakespeare conceived of her as bit of chaos, vitalism of lust and power - a withered branch torn from the tree, "the friend' So horrid as in woman" (IV, ii, 61 - 62) and a "Proper deformity" which her "woman's shape doth shield".

Cordelia, contrastied with the society of Edmund and Lear, also stands for a socisety outdone by the New man and New Age - herein Fdmund, and it is a society which has to exist in tears and sorrows, in rain and strom and moist - based upon unfettered competition, and the war of all against all.

Lear is a feudal state in decomposition, imperfect in form and operation. Edmund is a product of its imperfection, who pays nominal allegiance to Nature and Kindness. Of this Nature and Kindness, Cordelia is the full realisation, the norm by which the wrongness of Edmund's world and imperfection of Lear's is judged. And Cordelia's fight on behalf of her father symbolises the seed and recognition of the humauness is society the medieval world contained. Her perfection of justice, charity and truth requires a New Jerusalem. She belongs to the utopian dream of the artist and the good man. She like Nature is seen between the two half - natures ; the one a perverse foe, and the other a wayward but frail dependant. As Cordelia contends :

We are not the first.
Who wiih best meaning have incurred the worst.
For thee, oppressed King, I am cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false Fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters ?

And Lear wants to slide into escapism :

No, no, no, no ! Come, let's away to prison.
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage;
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness; so we ll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies : ... (V, iii, 9 - 14)

She stands and weeps and goes out with Lear silent. And we she her alive no more. If this is a short of dumbness of love, it is the same silence her answer to Lear "nothing" implies him, that she loves him "according to her bond, nor more nor less."

The theory of Cordelia's faulty admixture of pride' enters the canon. A.W. Schlegel, Coleridge's German contemporary, makes no mention of Cordelia's fault, which Swinburne later says "rescues Cordelia from perfection". When Cordelia, in answer to her father's implied request for flattery, follows up her uncompromising "Nothing" with the equally straightforward assertion :

I love your majesty
According to my bond, nor more nor less (I, i, 92 - 3)

It is for this that she is banished. Cordelia offers the proportionate love, which is the right and beautiful thing in a particular situation. For Cordelia, bond means 'natural ties' a duty, willingly accepted and cheerly carried out to right instinct. She introduces the central conceeptton of the whole play. The "bond", to which she refers is, far more than a legal obligation. Lear's fatherhood bears a "symbolic" implication or significance identical to that of Duncan's kingship in *Macbeth.* The family, like the Scottish state, is a "symbol" of well - ordered living. The authority of the father is counterpoised by the love of his children and their devotion aspires normally to the grace of his benediction, just as Macbeth's loyalty in the early stages of his career is rewarded by Duncan's bounty.

II

The crumbling of this pattern of reciprocal loyalties in the opening scene is presented in terms of a conflict between "nature", the true, permanent reality of thing and the vagaries of individual temperament. In Cordelia, objective "nature" and subjective impulse as two elements are truly united. For her, filial affection is a duty, returnable to the parent, who has, in her own phraseologies "begot", "bred" and "loved" her, in form of obedience, affection and respect. To her "bond" is based primarily upon a proper understanding of the constitution of things, and no rhetorical profession can strengthen it. It lies as a condition of health on the basis of human normality. Cordelia's behaviour represents a norm, a plenitude, in relation to which the imperfect or distorted motives of other members of the family are seen in their relative partiality.

In act IV, scene 7, as Lear, in the first meeting since he cast Cordelia out, is lying asleep, she kneels down before him awaiting him to awake. When he opens his eyes, he is sane but dazed. His first sight is Cordelia's face drenched with tears, gazing into his eyes with infinite pity, and his first thought is that she is a blessed spirit come to comfort a poor damned soul :

You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave,
Thou art a soul in bliss, but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald, like molten lead.

Cordelia : Sir, do you know me ?

Lear : You are a spirit, I know. Where did you die ?

Cordelia : Still, still, far wide ! (IV, VII, 45 - 50)

Old age has crippled Lear's capacity for self - control, making him as soon as he is crossed the prey of an anger, rooted in the blood, where as, Cordelia "a queen/Over her passion", "most rebel - like/Sought to be king o'er her" (IV, iii, 13 - 15). Lear moved to disclaim "propinquity and property of blood" (I, i, 114) to break bonds which precede reason and order, and upon which depends the unity of the family. The firmness with which Cordelia clings with unadorned simplicity to the position she aptly regards as sanctioned by "nature" is as much hereditary as the passionate devotion of her sisters to the selfish ends they have proposed to themselves. Her love for her father must have been mingled with pain and anxiety. She never knew the bliss of young love. There is no trace of such love for the King of France. She had knowingly to wound most deeply the being dearest to her. He cast her off. And after suffering an agony for him, and before she could see him safe in death, she was brutally murdered. To say in Bradley's terms, "with the tenderness of Viola or Desdemona she unites something of the resolution, power and dignity of Hermione, and reminds us sometimes of Helena sometimes of Isabella, though she has none of the traits which prevents Isabella, from winning our hearts."[6]

Cordelia's assertion of truth and right, her devotion to them touch of severity that characterises it, instad of being a compelling respect or admiration, become adorable in a nature so loving and inviting as Cordelia's. If Cordelia's behaviour tantamounts to a balanced and subjective conception of reality, Regan and Goneril, while unlike their father - perfectly conscious of their own motives, are fully unaware of the existence or validity of any universal norm to which these may be related. That is, Cordelia's quiet insistence on the "bond" is viewed to be the "spirit of reasonable control"[7] that Lear's regal status should imply, in Goneril and Regan, the passions lurking in the darker recesses of his undifferentiated humanity in terms of life and logical consistency.

Cordelia is a thing "enskyed and sainted" and yet we feel no incongruity in the love of the King of France for her as we do in the love of the Duke for Isabella. We think of Cordelia as quite young and as "slight and small".[8] Cordelia, with her "voice" "ever soft,/Gentle and low - an excellent thing in woman" (V, iii, 270 - 1), of all Shakespeare's heroine knew least of joy. Cordelia's dead body, "dead as earth" (V, iii, 259) is an "image of that "horror", "Fall" called the "promised end" of life - the answer to a question on the problem of death asked in *Hamlet*.

III

The memory of Cordelia becomes detached in a manner from the action of the drama. Since Shakespeare's was the tragic point of view, as evident in

the opening scene, a situation tragic for Cordelia as well as for Lear, Cordelia incorporates the traditional ideals of what John F. Danby calls "natural theology"[9] necessitating perfection in the individual in relation to the community. Ripeness indicates the riches implied in "pearl from diamonds dropp'd". Cordelia's tears become "holy water" dropping from her "heavenly eyes" - the practical metamorphosis of natural emotion into its spiritual distillation.

Our main attention must concentrate on Shakespeare's conception of love. As in Sonnets 20 and 36, what amounts to is : "I am sorry that normal sexual intercourse between us is impossible" and so far as intercourse is considered, as a necessity of the richest love - life. In the Christian scheme, God, the Father, is Dionysian, God the son - for the Apollonian is visionary-Apollonian, and the Divine Sophia, the poetic fusion. As Cordelia confirms her love to Lear :

Ay, my good lord.

Lear : So young, and so untender ?

Cordelia : So young, my lord, and true. (I, i, 106 - 8)

Yes, "heavenly true". But truth is not the only good in the world, nor is the obligation to tell truth the only obligation. The matter here is to keep it inviolate but also to preserve a father. And if truth were the only obligation, to tell much less than truth is not to tell it. And Cordelia's speech not only tells much less than truth about her love, it actually perverts the truth when it implies that to give love to a husband is to take it from a father. As compared with Isabella's hatred of impurity, Cordelia's hatred of hypocrisy and, in turn, her position is infinitely more difficult, and on the other hand, there is mingled with her hatred a touch of personal antagonism and of pride. Lear's words, "Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her" (I, i, 129), are monstrously unjust - but they contain one grain of truth.

Indeed, it was scarcely possible that a nature, so strong as Cordelia's, and with so keen a sense of dignity, should feel here nothing whatever of pride and resentment She, like Lear, has attained exceptional strength through suffering. We know that she has suffered and attained in his days of prosperity. It is simply the feeling that what happens to such a thing does not matter. All that matters is what she is. How this can be when, for anything the tragedy tells us, she has ceased to exist, we do not ask. But the tragedy itself makes us feel that somehow it is so. For it is necessary to tragedy that we should feel that suffering and death do matter greatly, and happiness and life are not to be renounced as worthless.

The pessimism about *King Lear* is not by any means the whole spirit of tragedy, which presents the world as a place where heavenly good grows side by side with evil, where neither extreme evil can long endure nor all that survives the storm is good, if not great.

As *Tempest* gives us an impression of the man to be but a dream and apparently incurable evil in the monster whom Prospero had tried in vain to raise and soften, and in the monster's confederates, it is this experience of treachery and ingratitude that troubles his old brain, and forces on him the sense of unreality and evanescence in the world and the life that are haunted by such evil. Nor, though Prospero can spare and forgive, is there any sign to the end that he believes the evil curable either in the monster, the 'born devil', or in the more monstrous villain, the 'worse than devils', whom he so sternly dismisses. He learns patience to regard his anger and loathing as a weakness or inffirmity, and would not have it disturb the young and innocent. And so, in the days of King Lear, as Bradley[10] "contends that it was the power of "monstrous" and apparently cureless evil in the "great world" that filled Shakespeare's great soul with horror as to force him sometimes th the infirmity of misanthropy and despair, to cry "No, no, no, life !" (V, iii, 303) and to indulge in the fitful fear - that is dream that must soon fade into a dreamless sleep.

King Lear is a great tragedy precisely because it is a play about human "nature" before being a play about the abuses of government or social inequility. It is this "nature" that is being revealed indeed, stripped and exposed to the prevailing "cold" for consideration. The state of "sophistication" beyond and through which Lear now sees, is more than the mere pride of position or the abuses of wealth. Both these things are normal attributes of human nature, part of the conventional superstructure in which a man hides his own true character which he owes to the brute creation, and there by he protects his otherwise "uncovered body" from the "extremity of the skies". Critics like Swinburne[11] call Cordelia, "the breathless Antigone of our stage", who has "one passing touch of intolerance" for what her sisters were after wards to brand as indiscretion and dotage in their father, which redeems her from the charge of perfection - no longer inhumanly divine from the sense of divne irritation as of Imogen.

In condemning his daughters, Lear is tacitly condemning the unjust social order in which they stand. Edmund's soliloquy reflects a new rationality opposed to the old fashioned Reason of Lear. Goneril and Albany's argument similarly puts one common - sense against a common sense that has nothing

in common with it. The reasons of Edmund and Goneril belong to a view with which post Darwinian thinkers can sympathise to show that the sisters are more sinned against than sinning. However, Edmund and sisters are the villains of the play. The ideal for man is not the beggar but the King. Though Nature involves self-control and self-limitation, it does not demand self-mutilation. Society in fact must conform to what the reasonable man, by God's light would recognise as Natural.

Shakespeare is at pains to make them eminently normal people. They are normal in the sense that they behave as we unfortunately expect people to behave. Lear could not survive, without metamorphosis, in the same context as Cordelia. King Lear reflects moods that are not only anti - authoritarian, and anti - social, but also anti - sexual. Grace is left with none of the Spenserian glamour except in relation to Cordelia and the revulsion is expressed crudely - as by Lear in his mad speeches. The Fool stands for the unlimited head - the intellect - as Lear is the soul, and Cordelia the spirit. He can discern in his cold light the alternative between which he cannot choose. Nature in him is an arrest of motion. The sort of thing he would long will not admit to exist. Cordelia as Shakespeare's metaphor for Grace and Nature is the be all and the end all. She incorporates the traditional ideal of "natural theology" - which requires not only perfection in the individual but perfection in the Community also.

Notes and References

1. .William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (ed.) G.K. Hunter, Penguin Books, 1972. All textual references in future are to this edition only. The page number is mentioned in parentheses.
2. A.C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Macmillan, London, Melbourne, Toronto, New York, 1952, p. 169.
3. John F. Danby, in *Shakespeare's Doctrine* of *Nature* : *A Study of King Lear*, Faber and Faber, London, 4th impression mc ml × i, p.125 is of the opinion that there is always a discrepancy between the truth the person aims at and the actual setting which makes it necessary to have that truth for an aim,
4. Ibid., p.123.
5. Ibid., p.132.
6. A.C. Bradley, *Shakespeareæn Tragedy*,

p. 264.

7. D.A. Traversi, *An Approach to Shakespeare*, 2nd edition, Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York, 1956, p. 185.
8. "Our last and least" (according to the Folio reading): Lear speaks again of "this little seeming substance." He can carry her dead body in his arms.
9. *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature; A Study of King Lear*, p. 125.
10. A.C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 276.
11. Clyde K. Hyder, *Swinburne As Critic*, The Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1972, p. 261.

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"Social Realism" and the Forms of Fiction

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One of the most promising and in many ways most gratifying intellectual developments on the west over the past decade or so has been the emergence of a materialist aesthetics worthy of respect and admiration. Where previously the feebler sorts of 'reflectionism', mechanically coupling textual facts with contextual ones, had held away, we have had in the formulations of a number of critics in the Anglo - American tradition something far more sophisticated and desirable : a structural critique of literary forces and relations of productions aiming at a semiological knowledge of a text's self - constitution.[1] The epistemological problem : is art refraction, invention, transfoamation ? The political problem, inseparable from the first : what is the relation between producer, product, and audience, between poetry and propaganda ? The related problem of aesthetic value : how far is 'value, in contradiction or internally bound up with historical progressiveness (however one cares to define this quality) ? Such questions are beginning to be investigated with considerable exactitude and freshness, and with that tenacious attention to literary form and ideology characteristic of the Hegelian heritage at its most fruitful. Of course not everyone will deem these issues important : indeed to many people the attempt to talk about art in such terms seems so much humbug, yet another vulgar bid to ambush the writer's project in the name of 'relevance'. And as often as not in these unfriendly quatters the ammunition

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for the assault so to speak, the item in the indictment to which the most opprobium attaches, is the concept of Socialist Realism.

Small wonder : in a sense yet to be explained, the very notion is self-contradictory, just as the term itself is an oxymoron. None the less, to seize upon such anomalies as an excuse for dismissing as highly evolved and perspicacious a doctrine as Marxism would be quite wrong. For it is well to remind ourselves that Marxism as well as being a programme for action involves a certain way of seeing, a systematic and often very subtle discourse committed to elucidating a particular image of the human estate. All the same,if we are honest we must concede that the theory of Socialist Realism has been the Achilles heel of Marxist speculation about art, just as its practice has been the pitfall of the Marxist creative imagination (assuming we can speak with any confidence of the existence of something so definite, which isn't at all clear). And given the weakness of so much comtemporary aesthetics, namely, the tendency to conduct a spectacular exchange around literature in which propositional 'correctness' is all and any purely literature points of reference are bonuses, it seems both sensible and courteous to start as we shall end, with the practice, with the actual literary tradition such as it is.

To talk of *the* tradition misleads perhaps by implying a condition of cultural homogeneity when in fact more than one national context is involved. Still, there are enough common features to warrant the usage. In the Soviet Union to begin with, what became known as Proletkult began under semi-official aegis after 1917, although writers like Gorky might have discovered in the rigorous utilitarianism of Belinsky and Plekhanov as earlier direct inspiration, had they sought it. Flourishing in earnest in the latter part of the 1920s and 1930s it achieved its epitome in A,A Fadeyev's *The Nineteen* (1929), Gladkov's *Cement* (1930), and Boris Piln'yal's novel of the first Five Year Plan, *The Volga Falls in to the Sea* (1932). (Dates given refer to the year of U,K. publication in English translation.) Earning the approval of *apparatchniki*, it incidentally provoked the dismay of Trotsky, shrewdest of critics, whose handsome demolition of its pretensions remains a treat to observe.[3] The phenomenon, together with its Stalinist aftermath, has been exceedingly well documented and anatomised, most notably by Gleb Struve and E.D. Brown.[4] It would however be an error to suppose that it is restricted in time and place to post-revolutionary Russia, more especially to the urgencies and enthusiasms of the NEP period. For rather different reasons, which are not far to seek, versions of it throve in America too during the Depression years, and though at present quite extinct only began to become moribund towards the close of the 1940s.

Surprisingly in view of the absence of remunerative state encourgement, writers after the manner of Jack Conroy, Albert Matz and Robert Cantwell were prodigal of output, to the point where sheer number and diversity invite an internal classification according to school. Once again, the subject has not lacked for thorough attestation.[5] What is perhaps rather less well known is the fact that the tradition (using the word for the moment to indicate a fundamental identity of species rather than any strict continuity on time) has had an outcropping into English literature proper : a fact being pointed out in candour at least as much because thc present writer happens to be on home territory here as for the sake of filling out the historical record.[6] At all events it will be apparent, I reckon, that parity of treatment across the national board is not absolutely necessary here for the purposes of generic evaluation and that such differences as do stand forth are quaint, the resemblances being what they are.

Where the tradition in England is distinguished from its American (though not from its Russian) counterpart is curiously, in point of longevity, and by the fact that writers were not in receipt of organisational or institutional backing to quite the same degree.[7] The rollcall begins with James Welsh's *The Underworld* (1920) and *The Morlocks* (1923), both set in the Fifeshire coalfields, and Harold Heslop's *Gate of Strange Field* (1929), and continues in the 1930s with Heslop's *Least Cage Down* (1935); John Sommerfield's *May Day* (1937) and Lewis Jones' diptych *Cwmardy ; the Story of a Welsh Mining Village* (1937), and *We Live'* (1939) (dealing with the formation of the syndicalist South Wales Miners' Federation in the years immediately preceding the Great War. But it extends into the 1950s and 1960s to include a group of novels harking back, in choice of theme and physical setting, to the literary ambience of their predecessors. Here the titles to oojure with are Dack Lindsay's "Novels of the British Way", *Betrayed Spring* (1953), *Rising Tide* (1953), and *The Moment of Choice* (1955); Len Doherty's *A Miner's Sons* (1955) and *The Man Beneath* (1957); Herbert Smith's *A Field of Folk* (1957), and *A Morning to Remember* (1962); Robert Bonnar's *Stewartie* (1964) and Brian Almond's *Gild the Brass Farthing* (1962), and Margot Heinemann's *The Adventures* (196). That the general reading public has never, to put it diplomatically, taken these writers to its bosom does not of course mean that they have not got their admirers. Now and then their work comes to the attention of the East Berlin - based *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, which for obvious reasons has a vested interest in calling attention to left - wing writers, and no doubt they also have a small but regular following in Britain among subscribers to journals like *The Marxist Quarterly* and *Labour*

Monthly, where advance notice of their publication and the occasional review sometimes appears.[8] Nevertheless, the fact that everyone else, including specialists, is unlikely to have heard of these novels let alone to have read them may serve (by Dr. Johnson's yardstick) as an apt enough comment on their intrinsic worth. Indeed, until quite recently academic opinion in England has seen fit to neglect their existence almost totally.[9]

It is a pretty sound instinct. With minor variations, the pivotal event common to all these novels (as indeed to their American and to a much lesser extent their Soviet counterparts) is a strike ruthlessly or deviously forced upon the employees of a shipyard, factory or mine. As it runs its course, a variety of figures are brought together, the callous and stubborn workers discovering the merit of trade unionism, the prejudiced ones the balm of solidarity, the misguided ones the wisdom of the communists, who, directly or unobstrusively, number among the leaders of the strike. The theme of education-through - struggle is pointed by recourse to repertoire of devices drawn from stock; the grandiose set - piece scenes involving angry marchers, the sentimental bestiary containing such figures as the muscular worker and his developed paramour and the wizened and indomitable strike - leader, veteran of countless battles with the owners and managers. Yet what is unaccepted about this theme is not so much the rigidity of its stylization as the manner of its emergence. For it forms part of a counter - plot, which gradually intercepts, overtakes, and eventually curtails the self - imposed need for the author to resolve the tensions, social and interpersonal, he initially purports to dramatise. And as the sub - schema hoves into view, the characters come to stand in trimly diagramatic relation to one another, no longer (as at the outset) transacting their affairs with one another in ways that impress us as credibly verisimilar, but pirouetting to a decorum of extremes, becoming more or less, but not merely human, passing through the action as through a formal dance and being progressively stripped of all complexities in order that the dance may not be disturbed. Plot begins to exaggerate out into chiaroscuro juxtaposition, the prose to be enervated by copybook dialogue. An action begun as imitation as charade, with figures announcing their presence in ways we are supposed to accept as plastic and lifelike, atrophying into mannequin - "types", whose lineaments, we see, have been set in a mould kept ready in reserve. Thus, massively defaulting on promises they make to their readers to end as they do on crescendoes as this—

> Jack had been right ! The fight would go on .... all men and women had been drawn in, each giving what he might toward a single end ....

> Together they would win. He squared his shoulders .. "There's nowt we can't do so long we're together," he exulted aloud. "Nowt at all ! The precious cornerstone is tried. We have but to build on it and the future is ours, forever !"[10]

—these novels have ensured their relegation to the decent secrecy of the remainder shelf.

To retrieve them from this limbo as indeed to linger upon their features in any detail would seem after such dismal preliminaries a thankless task. Yet they focus with fascinating precision the yoked set of problems broached at the outset of this essay, problems resolved with disconcerting neatness by Marxist critics in the seminar room (as distinct from the writer's worktable). The formula to which they are written belongs quite obviously to the conceptual universe of socialist realism as defined by its chief theoreticians, whose ideological pedigree is incidentally impeceable. These quite naturally take every care to make it plain that they frown on posterwork fabrications. Yet in their postulations (which if not dishonest are in certain respects heartbreakingly ingenuous), we shall find lines leading straight to the source of the very irregularities they so hotly decry. The creative thing mimes and in a sense is cued to the caitical thinking, both being instances of *Mauvaise foi.*

For they hold, with Ernst Fisher, for example, that such excesses ought not to be held in evidence against an aestheitic " perfectly valid in itself " because expressive of "the writer's fundamental agreement with the aims of the working class and the emerging socialist world".[11] Bent on the depiction of "society in its process of growth", it secedes from "the art of the capitalist world", - from "critical realism" - by certifying the conviction that "in our age the possibility of far-reaching objectivity is offered by taking sides with the working class". By disclosing "contradiction and conflict in the present", it shows "the birth of tomorrow out of today, with all the attendant problems". Thus, "anticipates the future. Not only what has preceded a particular historical moment, but also what will succeed it". This of course is a faithful reworking of Lukacs' definition of socialist realism as that which portrays "the forces working toward socialism *from the inside*", is "concerned to locate those human qualities which make for the creation of a new social order", and represents "human beings whose energies are devoted to the building of a different future".[12] with good reason to be anxious to avoid gloossing Lenin's ukase to the effect that "Literature must become an essential part of the organized, unified Socialist party work", Fischer (more forcefully than Lukacs) tries to his credit to forestall the charge of prescription, appearing as a limiting

clause the rider that "new art does not come out of doctrines but out of works".[13] But like Lukacs' his formulation sounds and is little different from those available in the *locus classics*. It may be remembered, was latterly in the habit of calling for "a rvolutionary romanticism the purpose of which is .... to promote a clearer view of the lofty objectives of the socialist future".[14] And Zhdanox hold out for "a selection from the point of view of what is essential, from the point of view of guiding principles", the portrayal of " how Socialism is growing in dees, in human beings".[15] All this Fischei, following Lukacs, would doubtless have little hesitation in pronouncing self - evident or "true by definition".[16] And his discussion is likewise couched in the optative case, turning similarly upon prolepsis : "the defeat of capitalism andthe growth of a classless society".[17]

Now on the critical side, the assumptions serviced by these prayerful enunciations die a hard death; more than one attempt at a conclusive interment has been made.[18] Nowhere to be sure are they voiced in the writings of Marx and Engels themselve : As R.W. Mathewson has shown, they take their rise from Lenin's conception of "partiinost", or partlymindedness, and generally need to be secn as congruent with his activist revision of Maix.[19] What scholarship has laboured to uncover, however, lay analysis immediately queries, in the spirit (in this case) of the boy querying the Emperor's finery. Any deductive critical theory, it will surely be agreed, requires a measure of justifiable prior consent in its underlyings axioms. A part from its notoriously illiberal applications, this theory is both exceptional and exceptionable in that its axioms are totally immune from disproof or validation. In "reality" as an event that has not yet happened, is lying in store in the shape of a great bonanza, one either has faith or one has not. But what on earth shall we make of a theory in which judgements about palpable proximate data - the text the setting, the recoverable authorial intention, - all of which can at least be apprehended and correlated to a knowable degree of probability - are referred to "that hard-and-fast perspective of the future"[20] - which cannot be known at all, only piously asserted or just talismanically invoked ? Assuredly a way of looking at literature that refuses to countenance elementary distinctions between "is", "ought" and "shall be", must come under suspicion as being less than capable of doing complete justice towards the objects of its inquisitions.[21] Those who lobby for its acceptance nevertheless raise (though they forbear to confront) an important issue, the implications of which are worth pondering. For (following Lukacs again) Fischer contends that "socialist art" (his euphemism) "clearly refers to an attitude not a style - and emphasizes the socialist outlook, not the realist method".[22]

And he goes on to give the socialist writer, secure in his "outlook", carte blanche to emulate available "bourgeois art" on condition that he infues it with "a positive social perspective". We are of course told that "new means of expression are needed to depict new realities". But these means, it turns out (argument here is circular), are in the event there for the taking in accredited methods of "bourgeois realism", which can promiscuously be "learned from" and invested opportunistically with "socialist content" according to need ! Loath though he is to condone any hiatus between "attitude" and "method" the two are suffered to remain in separation. And what exercises us here are the difficulties facing the novelist who, going about his craft in received ways while "taking sides with the working class and the emerging socialist world", takes the critic at his own eclectic word in a manner of speaking.

* * *

The chief difficulty (if this doesn't sound too pompous) is that of assimilating the Marxist perspective to the protocol of the traditional novel. Being so compendious a form, "the traditional novel" is obviously no more submissive to generalizations about its subject and structure than is "the Marxist perspective". Still, we may perhaps be permitted some fairly brief and malleable ones about the nature of both. With the formor we shall have to make some allowance for the precise balance the individual writer will be pleased or following custom be constrained to strike between a documentary fidelity to observed fact and outright fantasy. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, Stendhal and Dickens - these are the authors held up by Fischer as the measure of worth and emulation. Considered as typologies of creation (apart, that is, from the circumstances of their cultural season), what have fictions such as theirs in common such as enables subsumption under a single head ?

The striking shared feature, I believe, is not any uniformity of style or local procedure, but the way in which many varied mannerisms, emerging from very different needs and preoccupations among the writers who resort to them, seem to connect. And of the kind of novel apotheosized in, for example, *Anna Karenina*, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and *David Copperfield*, it can be said that a major part of its fascination is that it schemes to assemble a world more or less continguous with one we know, in all its capriciousness, its seeming irresolution, its gradations of motive and perfection, hesitation and soruple. In its approach to character it may be said to crystallize and preserve a view of human intercourse corresponding to our sense of the way things actually are,

a view based on a valuation whether in the gut as it were or in the head of the unconditional and idiosyncratic personal response. In this respect, much of its authority and persuasiveness is bound up with the nominal liberty the novelist extends to his people to select or desist from a course of action; to arbitrate between legitimate claims upon him; to enjoy rights of struggle and occasional grace, even to the extent of taking over the driver's seat of the narrative sequence. As with character in other words, so (where the novelists Fischer sets up as models are concerned) with plot. Its chance logics, conferring order upon the unfashioned material, work to engage our interest, variously, in the scrutiny of motives, in the collusion of disparate events, in mystery established at the outset and subsequently brought to a head. They demand that we attend not just to what will happen next, but, more strenuously, to why just that result. As the "method" Fischer appears to be keen on, realism is more than "individual Romantic protest against bourgeois society"[23] and to deny that it is to yield to a temptingly easy simplification. As arguably more acceptable definition, perhaps (if definitions there must be), is that realism is a grammar of presentation obeying an inner initiative of its own as well as being demonstrably the expression of a class which has had the upper hand.[24] It is (and I hope the jargon may be forgiven) a mode of writing in which the expectations felt of narrative ask to be satisfied through an unpremeditated imitation of multifarious experience as we commonly know it to be at the level of ordinarily accessible daily life. Openended in direction, interested in maintaining options upon itself, its status as an imaginary act depends upon a referential expressiveness revealing itself in just that working discourse we call 'plot' and 'character'. The vigour with which it customarily sustains itself issues from what W.J. Harvey with admirable felicity, calls

> A state of mind which has as its controlling centre an acknowledgement of the plenitude, diversity and individuality of human beings in society, together with the belief that such characteristics are ends in themselves. It delights in the multiplicity of existences and allows for a plurality of beliefs and values.[25]

To be sure, any definition must be rough-and-ready, and 'Realism' has had too violent a history for anyone to expect his own definition to meet with complete agreement from anyone else. Nor, it seems important to emphasize once more, are literary convehtions ever found embodied in a pure state; we always use them with a sense of approximation. The above use of the term is one which I believe to be most helpful in discussion, since it provides not a standard of judgement but an illuminating way of expressing a dissatis-

faction (or a satisfaction). And it is not, I think, misrepresenting the case to argue that the Marxist "state of mind"is dominated by presuppositions irreconcilably at jar with those of realism in the common understanding. Disseminating its meaning casuistically, Marxism in its classical adumbration at any rate proposes a valuation of experience in which the incessant combat of binary opposites assumes paramount importance. Its governing notions are corporative and necessitarian, its conception of the significance of human actions, both private and public, elliptical and metonymous. Quite irrelevant, of course, is Marxism's philosophical validity or otherwise. The question is its possible relation to that species of novel associated with the conviction which you and I are wont to hold that there is an empirically given world of rounded, self - directing persons, a world inhabited by - the words of one English critic of Fischer's persuasion - "real people, warts and all, absorbed in their lives and problems : "real conflicts, real failures".[26] And my contention is that it is impossible for that relation not to be fraught even, at times, to look very straines indeed.

Let me put it as follows : To insinuate and maintain a tension plausibly located in links of moral and psychological cause and effect, to deploy plot in the interests of effective dramatic encounter, to portray inconsistencies of feeling and equivocations of response - all this requires placing an unqualifiable premium on the principle of uncertainty and imcompleteness, in default of which the fiction will perish stillborn. It requires, that is, a conception of truth as something neither all-white, not all-black, nor even black-and-white, but as something opaleacent, hindering terminal judgement, with good and evil, the laudable and the despicable, too inseparaly knotted to prevent one saying what the world is finally "about". And it requires a sense of freedom as something permanently flexible, irreducibly multiform, often genuinely dnubtfuly in application and upshot and upghot. For the novelist who regards himself as blessed with a "grasp of the main lines of human development and recognise laws", who knows "whence we have come and where we are going", who believes himself privy to "the hidden laws governing all human relationships",[27] freedom and truth are bound to be differently construed. The former is seen in providential teams : as the liberty of a class and of the individual representative there of to move albeit hesitantly along foreordained paths, whether in triumph or in defeat. And no more disparaging or presumptuous a judgement is intended in suggesting here that which is "true" is not whatever-the-case-may-be but which ultimately impedes or absolutely retards or subsereves the elected purpose of men in whom vice or virtue is at the bottom more native possession then dear - bought achievement.

In short, it seems not unfair to assume that, operating as he does within a closed field of image and idea, the novelist after Fischer's heart will be least confortable with a protagonist whose make-up is defined by the aberrant inflexions it embraces, the morality of whose actions is permanently open to serious question. His dealings with both, uneasy as they must be, are likely to be hazardous, with the novelist under considerable pressure to suspend and finally to revoke his license to evolve character and proliferate plot with a view to giving a sufficient impression of "real conflicts, real failures". Plot is liable to become not an action allowing for development and setback along multiple axes but a prejudiced progress along well-marked. routes And the conventional portrayal of character - where this involves a relationship between the reader and a person viewed as a discretely bound individual moving through a comprehensible timescape of growth and evolution - gets ruled out of court. For the novelist's teleology, though it admits of dilemmas of choice, though it allows for entanglements of loyalty, though it acknowledges the possibiliy of resolutions painfully arrived at or of impasses broken, does not at the end af the day recognize any real alternatives. Where "existence determines consciousness", where "the real relationship of human beings to each other" are considered to depend upon "supersensible, supra-psychological motives, which unknown even to themselves, govern their actions, thoughts and emotions",[28] here realism is not, I dare say cannot be, the main objective. The novelist is operating *ex umbris et imaginābus in veritatem* (from shadows and types to reality), to use Cardinal Newman's phrase; and indeed there is a parallel with the Catholic view of the phenomenal world, Graham Greene or Muriel Spark in particular coming to mind. The moral and imaginative touchstone is not on this or that decision but the ultimate deciding, the supra-mundance lineup of sides. And what works against this is estranged from significance in the over - all framework of the "laws" of history, and thus in the fictive microcosm in which the drama of choosing is enacted, in the field in which the laws of social existence operate. To overstate the matter - as we must if distinctions are to have any use - the idea of a Marxist fictions, emphasizing as it does the immanence of an ineffable order in human affairs, signifies pattern and limitation; the idea of a realistic narrative the game's generative grammar so to speak, leaving to the side the vexed question of who makes up the rules of the game, stresses choice, pattern and potentiality. In terms of novelistic structure and intellectual cogency neither of these, I hasten to add, is superior to the other and the novelist is of course quite free to choose between them. What he cannot do - or rather what he can do only at the risk of incoherence is to choose both.

Yet, sure enough, choose both is precisely what the novelists cited at the beginning of this essay do. So, in fact, do Gorky in *The Mother* (1907), Anton Makarenko in *Road to Life* (1937), Alexei Tolstoi in *The Road to Calvary* (1945), and Louis Aragon in his massive *Les Communistes* (1949-51) - to name four of the novelists acclaimed by Fischer and Lukacs for their "agreement with the aims of the working class and the emerging socialist world".[29] The peculiar untowardness of these novels (quite apart from the overt didacticism implicit in their heroic stereotypy) derives from an authorial desire to have one's cake and eat it too. It is the product of a loaded contest between on the one hand the desire to tell a specific story through a linear progression of events; and, on the other, the urge to tell The Story, a tale subject to local permutation with this or that individual, this or that imbroglio, figuring manifestly as and instance of a general case finding its particular embodiment. The result is a fictional *modus operandi* that alters the terms of the discourse shortly after its commencement and brings its effectiveness to an end.

In advance of the justification which follows shortly, these are but the merest notes. But first a caveat. It is no part of my argument to foreclose upon the notional prospect of a credible fiction raised upon Marxist tenets. All I wish to do here is to wonder out loud about its likelihood under conventional circumstances. Indeed, the preceding goes some way towards suggesting why "good" Marxist novels are deserving of the accolade. It may help for illustration to turn to an American novel readers are least likely to be unacquainted with John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). Fischer and Lukacs assign it no place in their international pantheon. Yet all the ingredients of a Marxist "attitude" can be found in it. Consider it is the theme of exploitation, laid down in the depiction of the depredations of the baoking syndicates bent on terminating the Oklahoma share - croppers' mortgages and on combining their steadings into mechanized plantations. There is the theme of victimisation, in the description of the Joads being driven into exile and equally in the account of their subsequent hurrowing, intimidated as they are by police marshals in the employ of the fruit - growers, fleeced by racketeering entrepreneurs and bamboozled by leeching politicians. There is the theme of "education" and "conversion", Tom Joad beginning in phlegmatic self - absorption, and ending ' 'jus' puttin' one foot in front a the other". [30]And, throughout, there is the Manichean warfare of contraries, the Joads (representing all the "Okies") pitted against the Shawness Land and Cattle Company (representative of all the land - hungry corporations); the California Farmers Association against the migrants unions, still immature when the book ends with the standard prophecy (figured in the title) of a final vengeful settling of scores.

Ideological melodrama, and of the mandatory kind? To some extent yes, especially when Tom Joad announces his attention to take up the burdens of labour organization in the speech rising to the purple of "wherever there's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there" (p. 395). Here Steinbeck's imaginative nerve fails him, certainly. Yet the central tropes he manufactures are not only more acceptable than this, they are frequently radiant, often compelling, almost always possessed of a probity and an aplomb all their own. And this is largely because, while very much inspired by "clearly defined... communist ideas", he decidedly does *not* seek "to do somehow what Tolstoy did, or Turgenev",[31] although the reader might be forgiven for supposing that he does. On the whole he eschews all excursus into full - blooded mimesis, in plot and in characterization exploring - to use E.M. Forster's terms - the flatness to the virtual exclusion of the roundness. He formally asserts, and tries consistently to maintain, a claim to a quite different level of credibility from that lodged by a simulant realism. From the opening chapters (with their camera-eye disclosure of the turtle crossing the highway carrying and dispersing the seeds of life, sustaining shocks but moving unstoppably on) to the final beatific scene (Rose-of-Sharon suckling a starving stranger; she who cannot become a physical mother becoming a mother of all mankind) - he concentrates upon a single, fugally - patterned theme: the harrassed movement of a persecuted folk to a new territory, assembling as they travel into one mass, developing, as they cross frontiers, a code and an identity in response to their tribulations. The business of the book, both deep and superficial, is not the Joads themselves in their psychological growth or intricate moral interaction but the plurality of possible stories resembling theirs. The concern is with the hordes of people like them, becoming slowly aware of their condition, willing their survival,, knowing that survival depends upon mutual aid and joint standing fast against "the mean thing" (p. 228). And through an extended series of rich anagogic associations, the author contrives a form whose central motifs unfold a grand design, seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. He makes fairly mercenary use of Biblical correspondences, ecological comparisons, and organic symbols, using them both within each of the novel's chapters and establish relationships between the chapters themselves. Delicately, he allows the novel's incidents - sacrificing nothing of their concrete particularity - to fall into undeclared alignments and concurrences bearing additional overtones of meaning. Thus, reading, we come to perceive the chapters ordering themselves into sequences: drought (chapters 1-10), journey (chapters 11-18), sojourn (chapters 19-30), corresponding respectively to the Exodus from Egypt with its plagues and pharaohs (the bankers), settlement in Canaan and the encounter with the hostile inhabitants of a Promised Land (the California

landowners). And within this emblematically resonant subtext, the Joad family, twelve in number, come to be seen now as the Israelites led by Aarron and Moses (Tom and casey) delivering their flock from bondage; now sa the apostles (led by Jesus and John); now as an archetypal tribe (enlarged by near - kin, the Wilsons and the Wainwrights, met along the way) through suffering and wandering constituting themselves into a single unit in the roadside encampments accommodating a populace on the move.

Steinbeck, you see, has an impatience with imptation, and calculatedly gives way to this impatience, since his real concern is with the inimitable. So whenever our attention is drawn to the familiar and the commonplace within the novel, it is invariably to show that they carry the imprint of the extraordinary. That is, they function in his work not to establish a recognisable world - although it goes without saying that the historical provenance of the fiction is unimpeachable - but demonstrably as part of an unfamiliar (or from another coign of vantage an all too familiar) design. And the thing to emphasize is what he wishes to say is implicit in, and fully commensurate with, the means he uses to say it. Hence the famed intercalation of inner bridging chapters, some (like the impressive fifteenth), generalizing through parabolic dialogue the conflicts between the sharecroppers and the land - agents come to remove them; others describing the nature of the new nomadic society being formed on the roads; others, employing free-wheeling sales-patter and Psalmic rhythm, simply choric in function. They serve to constrain a continual perception of quasi-universality in the contingency of the here-and-now: to make us see, from many tangents, the recurrent ubiquitous strife of contesting groups in the usual arena of mortal dissension. And it is precisely because at key stages in the compositional process we sense the author repeatedly conducing us to the same perception, creating images and emanations of one situation in another, that we come tacitly to credit him with writing from the "historical viewpoint" of "the working class', whose side he has chosen to "take". Viewpoint here, notice, isn't just a matter of declaring athletically for a "principle", of mounting the podium to utter yea or nay; but, as matter of narrative policy, of strophic intimation, grand "standing-for" and elaborated "seeing-as".

Iu sum, it's a matter of pitching the "socialist outlook" in a certain direction, and of allowing that bias to establish the terms of the whole narrative enterprise. No less than, for instance, Mikhail Sholokhov (in the portrayal of Davidov) in *Virgin Soil Upturned* (1935), Steinbeck is perfectly capable of writing in the realist mode while genuflecting before an icon of "human beings whose

energies are devoted to the building of a different future". Witness the placard-like Nolan, and the placard-like action generated around him, in *In Dubious Battle* (1936). In what is perhaps his best novel, we observe that he elects to deploy Marxism in reverse as it were : not as chiliastic prognosticaton but as a way of attuning himself and his readers to a vision of hitherto persistent and still ever-present antinomies between rich and poor, masters and men - a populist vision that as it happens is potently embodied in Marx's own vision of social conflict.[32] And we can't fail to remark as well that he draws upon that vision to fortify and knit together a narrative that is at once genuinely fictive and is relatively novel. Fictive, in that it involves the short of imagining which is pertinent, being that of seeing X as y, where to see X (the struggles of one family with their persecutors) as Y ("the class struggle") is not to believe X *is* Y, but to entertain the constantly unasserted thought of X *as being* Y. Relatively novel, in that the narrative itself has been planfully requisitioned from orders of storytelling eccentric to orthodox canons of mimetic representation.

If *The Grapes of Wrath* is the exception that proves the rule, so too are Sholokov's Quiet *Don Trilogy* (1935-40), Ignazio Silone's *Fontamara* (1931), and that superb novel that is only just beginning to receive the attention it deserves, Lewis, Grassic Gibbon's *A Scots Quair* (1232-34).[33] There's no prior reason in fact to suppose that the thing can't be done. The point is that when done, in works like the aforementioned, what we are getting could not be further removed from the continental novels admired by Fischer and Lukacs, and from the novels, catalogued earlier, which extend the tradition into England. A broad indictment, then, and one which certainly can't be substantiated item for item in the present forum. As example is needed, and from the (personally) more accessible end of the charge-sheet, James Barke's *Major Operation* (1936) might well serve. It doesn't give prominence to factory or pit-politics. And it leaves off the common-or-garden formulae to portray at length "conflict and contradiction" as they affect a character from across the ramparts, so to speak. Just for these reasons, and because of relative ease of access *the novel* (having been recently re-issued) offers plenty of scope for commentary on the besetting vices of the species to which it belongs.

Laid in Glasgow of the 1930s, Barke's novel traces the varied careers of George Anderson, a coal agent *Nel mezzo giorno*, and Jock Mckelvie, shipyard worker and trade-union organizer. The dissimilarity between the two men develops into the central theme of the narrative, the lengthly reticulated parts of which succeed each other regularly in time while advancing co-axially towards a single centre. The somewhat raffish Anderson we follow through

the failure of his business and subsequent insolvency, his efforts to cope with his fears of impotence, the inconstancy of his harridan wife and the regardlessness of erstwhile friends; Mckelvie, through the daily round of metal-plating and shop-floor wrangling. The former, grappling with his personal difficulties, gradually composes a sorry picture. He is listless, prudish, naggingly indecisive, unsure of himself and of his capacity to fend off his former business associates, a sybaritic lot.

Of Mckelvie's nature, as revealed in work and deed, we are left from the outset in little doubt. Full of animal vitality, in pub, bed, and welding bay, with "an air of authority about him",[32] he comes to seem the very apotheosis of gallantry, his absorption in the doekworkers' affairs an specific sign of a larger congenital penchant for magnanimous gesture. Anderson, by comparison, distracted by his financial woes, lapses into a dilettantish and self-absorbed existence, living meanly in furnished digs. A phase of sexual involution sets in, his melancholia aggravates a duodenal ulcer, and he fetches up in a hospital ward. In this same ward Jock chances to arrive laid low with a rupture caused by his tireless exertions. Lying each abed, they strike up conversation, and the collapse of his affairs, sheer fret, and dismay at the pass his life has come to, all dispose Anderson to heed with growing fascination Jock's quenchless perorations on the subject of the coming convulsion. Wresting from Anderson the painful admission that his has been a fortunate fall, and administering a fearsome chastisement for the remission of duties long neglected, Jock tells the ruined coal-agent :

> You've been pressed down into the ranks of the workingclass. We hold out a hand to you if you are willing to take it we offer you a place in the rans and a stiff fight when you're there we don't offer you an easy road, but we offer you a sure road (pp. 339-40)

The scales thus falling from his eyes with an audible clatter, Anderson comes round to admitting that "one thing anyway" he had learnt a lot about the working class .... they were in every way superior to his [own] class" (p. 3 6). Guided under McKelvie's sure hand "out of the endless maze of doubt and uncertainty (p. 354) and feeling "sure of himself for the first time", he entreats with his preceptor to be inducted into the fold while "there's still time not only to make a fight for myself but for the world that must come" (p. 363). The moral is obvious : the surgery on Anderson's mind has been a success : hesitantly he is treading the path of salvation, "proud", as he explains to his wife's lover (a former business associate) to be "an apostate, a renegade on the other side of the barricade now" (p. 392). So, destitute

upon his release from hospital and barely convalescent, he accepts a bed in McKelvie's home, husbanding his strength in preparation for the battle with the class "to which I no longer belong" (p. 363). But the vestiges of his former self still trouble him : he is imperfectly equipped to take up arms, fettered as he is by a host of self-doubts and mined from within by irrational fear. Feeling shackled by what Mckelvie, with monomaniac earnestness, interprets as "the weaknesses and handicaps of his class" (p. 492), confused and ashamed and blaming himself for "his inability to grasp the significance of events" (p. 385), he resolves upon suicide, only to be frustrated in his deicision by a supervening spiritual lessitude. The further period of penitential self-castigating in lonely bedsitters that follows is interrupted as, wandering aimlessly in the streets, he meets up with a mammoth procession all pennants and phalanxes, Mckelvie at its head. Unprovoked, the police attack, battering down its figurehead; Anderson, rallying, leaps into the fray, and seizing the Red flag in an access of self-possession, plants himself above the prostrate leader, only to be himself trampled underfoot and killed. At his graveside McKelvie, the huzzas of comradespealing round, delivers the tribute, deploring his ineffectualness yet extolling his good intentions and powers of foresight . . . well, on this or on any other showing it will be obvious that *Major Operation* is a pretty excruciating affair. Yet it will also be apparent that the primary blame for its gaucheries is not collected by a starved imagination or by a congenitally debilitated technique. Surveying in copious detail the miscellany of daily living in the "Second City", the novelist acquits himself rather well. Nor, fundamentally, do its faults lie with the compulsive infatuation with *idee fixe* worrying enough as this is. A piece of operatically proportioned statuary, Mckelvie in his humourless inflexibility presents few problems either for the novelist or for his readers. No ordinary human clay, this "read leader, . . . of splendid frame and constitution" (p. 45) is clearly in the novel by doctrinal fiat, as shown by the promptitude with which he is on hand to dispense with alarming ease grace abounding to the chief of sinners; and by the hortatory uplift of his monologues. The whole conception is the fruit of perfervid wishful thinking, not of recalled or observable actualities, and critics like Fischer really have no call to deplore such "propagandist idealizations"[35] if novelists like Barke merely loyally corporealize what they in the abstract recommend.

So much is plain, Yet Barke doesn't waste any more time than he needs on his paragon-figure. He merely winds him up and lets him trundle garrulously about, as if conceding that the character is ersatz and his whole presentation incredible. Instead he devotes the better part of his attention - and directs the reader's - to his answering study. And it is here we observe the more

basic incompatibility between "outlook" and "method" I spoke of earlier. It reveals itself in a hapless defection from an imaginative post that, once occupied, needs to be diligently manned lest the convincingness of the entire composition be irretrievably undone. For in Anderson's discomfiture, in his decline, fall and ostensible redemption, the novelist has granted himself permission to explore a theme of potential complexity and seriousness. He has thrown doors open upon an interesting subject : a man perplexed by intellectual uncertainty, bewildered by the need to rethink ideas previously taken for granted, suffering one debacle after another in the sphere of personal relationships and all the while labouring in agony to reconstruct a shattered self. And to be sure the subject *is* exploited : a studied attempt is indeed made to render believably the slides and erosions with the personality wrought by psychic travail, Anderson in diffident, groping debate his new-found friend; Anderson digesting in solitude his marital insufficiencies, "desperate for human company" (p. 408); lacking the self-confidence to respond to a sympathetic staff nurse's sexual overtures, and, thrown over, "wandering farther and farther into the futility of no-man's-land" (p. 416), while aking out a livelihood as a publican's assistant - all this, within the natural limits of the novelist's capabilities, is sympathetically done, Gissing-fashion. Here at least we appear to have the makings of an attempt to present a character with some allowance for psychological truth-to-life, to present him as possessed of an intricate inner existence of his own.

But it won't wash The bre.ibilising, short-circuited in mid-prassage, is doomed, the psychology, so painstakingly annotated in chapter after chapter, travestied by the author's over-riding intent. *Anderson acts spontaneously from a nature which, we are supposed to see, has developed under certain absolute imperatives.* It is, we are meant to understand, because he is ineluctably a "bourgeois" that he must suffer ignominy and endure mental distress; that, unlike the McKelvies of this world, he must be pusillanimous, neurasthenic, and luckless in the prosecution of his sexual affairs - and do penance for all this. And when, eventually, we are invited to accept as the rationale for his inability to stay thoughts of suicide the fact that

> There had always been about him caution, reason, and a chrinking from open and abandoned affection. And when he had come to make his contact with the working class, he found them suspicious and reserved. He realised clearly that he himself had acted with suspicion and reserve . . . This was Anderson's trouble. He took everything to himself. Sensitive to his own failings and shortcomings, he added to his burden the burden of shortcomings of others . . . He

could not cleanse himself of his unconscious middle-class isolation (pp. 457-58).

—we realise that his creator, notionally committed to revealing his character with an eye to interior veracity, can and will succeed only in "exposing" him. It is a crucial failure in literary tact. And it is just one of many such in the novel that rouse the suspicion that, unable to arrest the drift into cliche, the author is quite incapable of behaving with consistent good faith towards the subject and peusonage he proposes to explore with every pretence to a thick lifeliveliness. Barke, a novelist not without basic technical proficiency, has cut the ground from under his own feet, Stepping forth to do the job he has assigned himself officially, he finds himself pinioned between the wish to unfold a full-blown study in breakdown and bewilderment leading to an enlightenment; and the equally strong urge to exhibit his subject as a case-study, a "type", doomed to perdition because of what he irreducibly is, not because of what he has done, An inherently complex situation, crying out for the amplified treatment it deserves, is collapsed into a monopathic formula : a formula that hampers the release of a a multiplied response - pity touched with dread, esteem or contempt tempered by reservations or even qualified by irony and laughter - awakened in the reader by the novel's announced subject and storytelling format. The result is a masive discordance at the heart of the work. It shows, alright : in the flagrant abuse of authorial omniscience and in the sponsorship of that portentous attitudinizing surrounding the outward event and the inner response to it. Pastiche occurs when it can be least afforded, leading to sustained essays in ventriloquism that never lose the effect of parody. And the end is a focus so distended as to suspend irrecoverably the fictive illusion, causing the reader to quarrel with the author by calling into question the very thing the lattter would least wish to be queried : his sense of trustworthiness as a witness to the people and situation whose reality he continually asserts :

> Anderson decided to commit suicide. Throughout the day he had heard the sound of flute band and music as contingent after contingent of marchers entered the City. The sound of music, the shouting and tramping of the marchers drove him into a suicidal frenzy. He knew he ought to be in the ranks. He knew he had betrayed himself utterly and beyond redemption . . . (p. 456).

I shall, I know, be accused at this stage of not having played fair, in having applied an overplus of theory to a bare minimum of text. There may some substance to this allegation insofar as *Major Operation* is a rudimentary affair,

too primitive, it will be charged, to warrant bringing up heavy critical guns, so that attacking it is rather like breaking a butterfly on a wheel. Certainly when all is said the novel is extreme in its lack of amenity. But it is not freakish,and to maintain that an entire genre is being assessed adversely by arbitrary reference to one of its more forlorn representatives would be more charitable than judicious. Assuming the reliability of translation examination of novels as far apart in time and place as Leonid Leonov's Soviet 'constructive' novel *Skutarevsky* (1932), and David Lambert's two novels of Clydeside militancy, *No Time for Sleeping* (1956) and *He Must So Live* (1958) will leave precious little room for suspension of judgement on the (in any event highly debatable) grounds of cultural or historical relativism.

Does this mean, then, that Lukacs' confidence in Socialist Realism as "a possibility [if] not an actuality"[36] is misplaced ? Again, not entirely. For it may be necessary to remind oneself that if "the true bearers of ideology are the very . . . forms of the work itself,"[37] there is another side to the coin, namely, that a change in the latter may betoken change in the former. The real challenge the "engaged" writer has yet to face up to is not the outright appropriation but the audacious reworking of generic literary form, the affronting of the inherited formal possibilities at his disposal which may well be inimical to the sorts of things he wants to say.[38] The concept of political *engagement* and of engaged writing then take on a more radical significance, becoming not only a matter of 'views' and 'outlooks' but a more complex question of concretely reshaping the formal manoeuvre. "Commitment", then, gets staked upon the novelist's imaginative venturesomeness, upon a capacity for conceiving his project in opposition to the whole set of artistic choices apparently on offer, as Walter Benjamin in a famous essay saw clearly.[39] To go so far as to demand equivalents in the novel of the example of Brecht in the drama - or of the modernist experiment in general - may be asking a lot (especially since Brecht's, of all, is the hardest act to follow). But it is hard to avoid going so far, for the partisan observer as much as for the disinterested. The honest conclusion both must reach is that, where it distinguishes the revolutionary novel more in matter than in manner, and where it invites the writer as such to behave accordingly, Lukacs' sanguine phrase is at the very least a kind of whistling in the dark and at the most a confession of surrender.

Notes and Reference

1. See, for example, Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London, Methuen, 1976) and *Criticism and Ideology* (London, New Left Books, 1976); Raymond Williams' *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1977), and Tony Bennett's *Formalism and Marxism* (London, Methuen and Co., 1979), which supplies the best overview to date of recent development in the field. Pierre Macherey's is a name to conjure with here although an over-estimated one in my opinion, and his *A Theory of Literary Production* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) testifies to the (not always beneficial) influence of Althusser on the live of thought represented by the above group.
2. See, for example, Eagelton, *Myths of Power : A Marxist Study of the Brontes* (London, Macmillan, 1975), as well as his 'Tennyson : Politics and Sexuality in *The Princess* and *In Memorian*, in Francis Barker *et al.* (eds.) *The Sociology of Literature* : 1848 (University of Essex Press, 1978); and Fredric Jameson, *Fables of Aggression : Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980). An excellent, because clearly written and accessible, working model of the dialectical approah to textual analysis is to be fond in Mary Poovey's 'Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*', *Criticism : a quarterly for literature and the arts*, vol. XXI, no. 4, Fall 1979, pp. 307-330.
3. See his *Literature and Revolution*, trans. Rose Strunsky (New York, International Publishers, 1925), pp. 190-200 and *passim*, as well as his essay 'Class in Art', in *Leon Trotsky on Literature and Revolution* ed. with an introduction by Paul N. Siegel (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1970), pp. 65-81.
4. See *Russian Literature under Lenin and Stalin 1917-1953* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), esp. pp, 130-40, 245-49, and 286-301; and *The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature 1928-1932* (New York, Columbia Vniversity Press, 1953). A very recent, and not generally convincing apologia for this body work, written from the vantage point of Russian Formalist theory is: Gary Saul Morson,'Socialist Realism and Literary Theory' *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XXXVII, 2 (Winter 1979), pp. 121-35. (This article came to my attention after completion of my own researches, but I am pleased to report that its argument and

conclusion do not nenate my cwn.)

5. See esp. Walter J. Rideout, *The Radical Novel in the United States 1900-1954; some interpretations ol literature and society* (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1956), esp. pp. 47-87 and 255-91; the appendix, pp. 292-300 lists the novels dealt with.
6. A commendable beginning has been made already by David Smith in his survey, *Śocialist Propaganda and the Twentieth Century English Novel* (London, MacMillan, 1978). For an approach rather more partisan and restricted in scope of coverage to the inter-war years, see H. Gustav Klaus, 'Socialist Fiction in the 1930s : some preliminary observations', in John Lucas (ed.) *Renaissance and Moddern Studies* [voi. XX] Nottingham, Sisson and Parker, 1976), pp. 14-39.
7. Such connections as existed between the fortunes of the CPGB and the Left Book Club, and those of the writers mentioned above await systematic investigation, but for the 1930s see Neal Wood, *Communism and the British Intellectvals* (London, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1959), esp. pp. 37-95, and Samuel Hynes, *The Auden Generation : Literature and Politics in England in the 1930s* (London, The Bodley Head, 1976)); for the modern period there is little to go on. Equally, it would be a fascinating and very worthwhile exercise to look into the publishing history of the firm of Lawrence and Wishart, under whose imprint most of the novels were published, and whose interest in writers both left wing in politics *and* working-class in origin (like Harold Heslop, South Shields collier and an active member of the Durham Miners' Union in the 1920s; or Robert Bonner, railway engineer and chairman of the Dumfermline branch of the National Union of Railwaymen) was and is pronounced.
8. See, e.g., Carl-Thomas Crepon's article, 'Artistic Techniques in Herbert Smith's Novels', in *Essays in Honour of William Gallacher : Supplement, Thomas Spence : The History of Crusonia and other writings* Berlin, Humboldt Universität, 1966), pp. 254-59. [Commissioned by the editors of *Z,A.A.*]; Arnold Kettle's reviews of Lambert, Smith and Doherty's books, 'Two Working Class Novels', *Marxist Quarterly*, III, 4 (Octotober 1956), 248-50, and 'Three Recent Novels', *Labour Monthly*, XI, 5 (May 1958), 232-35. On Lindsay's 'Novels of the British Way', see Alick West, *The Mountain in the Sunlight : Studies in Conflict* (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1958), pp. 199-208.

9. The point is conceded, with some chagrin, by Smith himself in the preface and Conclusion to his study; see *Socialist propaganda*, pp. 1-2 and 154-55.
10. Brian Almond, *Cild the Brass Farthing* (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1962), pp. 206-7.
11. *The Necessity of Art ; A Marxist Approach*, translated by Anna Bostock, (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1971), p. 107-114, and *passim*.
12. 'Socialist Realism and Critical Realism', in *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, translated from the German by John and Necke Mander (London, Merlin Press, 1963), pp. 93, 96.
13. Quoted in W.K. Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks, *Literary Criticism : A Short History* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), p. 469; Fischer, *op.* cit., p. 110.
14. Quoted in *Documents of Modern Literary Realism*, edited by George J, Becker (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 487.
15. *Problems of Soviet Literature : Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers Congress[1934]: byA.A. Zhdanov, et al.*, edited by G.H.G. Scott (London, Martin Lawrence, 1935), p. 181.
16. Lukacs, p. 100.
17. Fischer, pp. 112-13.
18. David Craig's is the most recent attempt at a resurrection, in this introduction to *Marxists on Literature and Art : An Anthology* edited by David Craig (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 12-13. The most cogent refutations are by Herbert Read, *Art and Society* (London, Faber and Faber, 1945), pp. 128-37; and by Abram Tertz, *On Socialist Realism* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1960), esp. pp. 23-33 and 80-95.
19. See *The Postive Hero in Russiau Literature* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 147-73. In his writings on literature, Mathewson points out, Marx neither suggested that "a higher development guaranteed higher forms of art", nor held, as did Lenin, that "art's Value depends upon the 'progressive' or 'reactionary' attitude it assumed" (p. 168). On the Leninist notion of "partiinost", see Mathewson, pp. 200-13; and Harold Swayze, *Political Control of Literature in the USSR, 1946-59* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 8-13.
20. The penchant for wishful thinking and self-validation in Lukacs' writing has come under fire before, notably by T.B. Bottomore, 'Class Structure and Social Consciousness' in Istvan Mézaros (ed.) *Aspects of History and Class Consciousness* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971),

pp 49-64, esp. p. 51, but it is clear that the epigraph from *The Holy Family* [1845] which inspires Lukacs' brand of metaphysics - quoted in his *History and Class Consciousness : Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (trans. Rodney Livingstone, London, The Merlin Press, 1971) is a vatic dictum belonging to the millenial strand of the master's thought, where it figures as a postulate hopelessly at variance with his own testable and experience-oriented insights.

21. Thus, Lukacs begins by telling us that "Socialist Realism is a possibility rather than an actuality", (p. 96); ends by stating that "it has produced a range of masterpieces" (p. 135); and in between booms out unsupported assertions as to its "superiority" (p. 115), not one of the works of the novelists mentioned (Gorky, Makarenko, Alexei Tolstoy) being discussed by way of specification. Perhaps it is just as well, considering Lukacs on Solzhenitsyn, where what starts off as an intelligent analysis of the relation of structural principles in the latter's novels to those found in Thomas Mann's, is revealed to turn upon the assertion that "Solzhenitsyn's works stand as a rebirth of the noble beginnings of socialist realism" (*Solzhenitsyn*, translated from the German by Willium David Graf (London, Merlin Press, 1970), p. 36). This, of course, is downright preposterous. Whatever else *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1963) may be, its scheme of crypto-Christian values has nothing in common with - indeed, stands as the greatest indictment of - socialist realism, especially as represented by the one, rather frayed, instant Lukacs offers of its "noble beginnings", Anton Makarenko's *Road to Life* (1936), a characteristic exercise in agit-prop which Lukacs over-rates, presumably to flaunt his doctrinal *bona fides*.
22. Fischer, *loc. cit.*
23. Fischer, p. 107.
24. In effect this is the burden of Ian Watts' pioneering study, *The Rise of the Novel* (1962). See also Diana Spearman, *The Novel and Society* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966). That the observation is now a commonplace of English literary history is owing, one can't help feel, to the industry and percipience of Watts' exploratory efforts.
25. *Character and the Novel* (London, Chatto and Windus, 1965); p. 25.
26. Margot Heinemann, 'Workers and Writers : some Modern Novels about the Working-Class', *Marxism Today*, VI, 4 (Spring 1962), 111-19 (p. 119). See also her article, 'Andre Stil and the Novel of

Socialist Realism', *Marxist Quarterly* 1, 2 (April 1954), 117-26 for a discussion of two French novels offered as examples of works meeting Miss Heinemann's requirements : Stil's *The First Clash* (1953) and *A Gun is Loaded* (1954).

27. George Lukacs, *Studies in European Realism* : *A Sociological Survey of the Writings of Balzac, Zola, Tolstoy, Gorki and others* (London, Merlin Press, 1972), pp. 2, 5.
28. Lukacs, *Studies in European Realism*, p, 143.
29. Though never as baldly stated, and in a very different context of analysis, this is the conclusion reached as well by Helen Muchnic in her chapter on Gorky, in *From Gorky to Pasternak : Six Modern Russian Writers* (London, Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1963), pp. 29-103 (see esp. pp. 88-100); and by Mathewson in his discussion of Alexei Tolstoy, pp. 310-15.
30. London, Heineman, 166o, p. 156. Further page references are to this edition.
31. Heinemann, pp. 117, 119.
32. This last point is persuasively argued by Stanisilaw Ossowski, who brings evidence to suggest that 'Marx and Engels are above all the inheritors of the dichotomic perceptions found in folkore', maintaining that 'reading their work one never loses sight of the age-old conflict between opressing and oppressed classes', (*Class Consciousness in the Class Structure*, trans. Sheila Patterson (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul), p. 74; see also pp. 34-37, 85.
33. See my article, '*A Scots Quair* : Marxism, Literary Form, and Social History', *History Workshop Journal*, Number, 11, Spring 1981.
34. Plymouth [U.K.], Cedric Chivers, Ltd., 1975, p. 311. All page references are to this edition.
35. Fischer, p. 107.
36. *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, p. 96.
37. *Marxism and Literary Criticism*,
38. For a slightly different treatment than the one used here of a cognate problem, see my essay 'Protest and Prepossession : the case of Proletarian Fiction in England in the 1930s', *Modernist Studies ; Literature and Culture 1920-1940*, No. 3, 1980.
39. See 'The Author as Producer', trans. John Heckman, *New Left Review*, July-August 1970), pp. 83-96 (p. 85.). See also David Caute, *The Illusions : An essay on theatre, politics, and the novel* (London, Andre Deutsch, 1971), pp. 20-22, and *passim*.

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Reading Characters

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Watching Othello's terrible jealousy work in him, we fear for Desdemona and the fear implies our belief that she is in danger. Our knowledge that Desdemona does not exist implies, however, that the belief in her danger is either false or meaningless, and we find ourselves in the position of believing both that she is in danger and either that she is not in danger or that the belief in her danger is meaningless.1 One way out of this irrational predicament is to deny that we fear for her, arguing that whatever the feeling is, it is not fear, or is quasi-fear, or is fear with a different logic from fear whose object is thought to be real. Another way is to claim that we suspend disbelief in her existence and can, therefore, rationally believe in her danger.2 I will suggest a third way, namely, that 1) Desdemona is a figure of speech that figures our inner life as we read "her," 2) the beliefs that structure our feelings are beliefs generated by taking the soundings of our inner life as it is figured by the characters and their play, and, therefore, 3) Desdemona exists timelessly as a figure of speech and momentarily as a union of structuring figures and reader's feelings.

These are different strategies for solving what may be called the world-world problem of representational art : how can someone in the actual world have propositional attitudes toward some one or event in a fictional world ? How can attitudes cross worlds ? When fear and other emotions are analyzed

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as dispositions to experience characteristic sensations or behave in characteristic ways structured by beliefs, and beliefs as propositional attitudes, the possibility of having feelings toward fictional entities depends on the possibility of taking attitudes towards them. The problem is not that we cannot understand how we can have attitudes toward works of art. They are in the actual world, after all, and we can refer to them. We cannot refer into them, however, because of the axiom of existence governing referring expressions : what is referred to must exist. The play *Othello* exists, the characters Othello and Desdemona do not. At most we can pretend to refer to Desdemona and it might seem to follow that at most we can pretend to fear for her. But it is often the case that we really do feel what is most naturally described as fear and that we feel it even as we are saying "It's only a play, no man will put out her light." How is this rationally possible ?

The feeling is the sign that we understand Desdemona's plight, not simply that we see the set of Othello's course and know that he must kill her, but that we understand *what it is like* for Desdemona to suffer his love. The fear occasioned by the play *is* structured by beliefs, not the false or meaningless belief whose object is expressed by "Desdemona is threatened by Othello's passion" but beliefs about what it is like to be Desdemona, and what it is like to be Othello as well. For to appreciate the enormity of the threat to Desdemona, we must know not simply the general truth *that* jealousy tends to be destructive hut *how* the maddening passion is working in Othello, how it is consuming him. These structuring beliefs are the result of an experiment : the subjection of the given to certain procedures for the purpose of discovery. Here, the given is the text of the play and what is sought is knowledge of what it is like to be the characters. From what is given we design and then perform a series of experiments in imagination whereby we identify with the characters against the background of certain conventions.

The task of this paper is to reconstruct these imaginative experiments in such a way as to allow a solution to the world-world problem. The space between actual and fictional on this reconstruction becomes the difference between the set of descriptions true of the reader and the set the reader imagines true of herself. The latter consists of the words in the work and the reader's elaboration of them. It constitutes the objective moment of a character whose subjective moment is constituted by the reader's performance of acts of imaginative identification with it. Or, more precisely, the space between actual and fictional is expressible as the difference between thoughts and feelings generated by what is believed to be true and those generated by what is

imagined true, between the reader's thinking and feeling as herself, one whose history unfolds in the actual world, and as one identified with a particular character.

The reconstruction turns on the role of imagination in the reader's identification, a kind of imagination similar to the imagination of sensations. For to imagine seeing Venice is to have the visual experience of seeiug it and to imagine being one in a fearful predicament, Desdemona, is to experience the sensations of fear - not as oneself but as Desdemona.

CHARACTERS

There is a world-world problem because characters do not exist and yet there is such a connection between them and people that people do adopt propositional attitudes toward them; the problem is to explain how this is rationally possible. A satisfactory explanation requires an account of what characters are and what is the connection between them and readers. I have given such an account elsewhere and will summarize it here.[3] A character is a set of descriptions given by a text, at least one of which is the description of a typical human characteristic, and a character is more than the words on the pages of its text in that it is whatever further descriptions both are consistent with the words and are such that the reader can discover what it is like to be the characters by performing an experiment in imagination.

A character is elaborated by a reader when the reader adds to the descriptions in the text that constitute the character. The elaboration may be conservative or radical : conservative when supported by received theories of the culture, radical when contradicted by or incommensurable with them. Notice that the requirement that an elaboration be consistent with the words in the text is relatively weak : it does not require that the text imply the elaboration but only prohibits the elaboration from contradicting text. Now, among our culture's theories is the theory that the self is a unity reflected in the consistency of its memories, desires, beliefs and intentions. Therefore an elaboration of a character that unsettles the consistency of the reader's memories, and desires, beliefs and intentions, will be said to be radical on the assumption that the more or less fixed character of the self is analogous to the more or less fixed set of theories and common beliefs and values of the culture : the "set" of self and culture tends to determine the course of each unless it is *subverted*. Some elaborations, then, are continuous with the (reader's) self and the culture, some discontinuous or subversive.

One character can be elaborated in many ways. What is to count as one ? The criterion of identity for character is that one character is the *same* as another just in case all of its characteristics (descriptions) are the same. Otherwise, it is different. There are many Othellos. They are, nonetheless, all proliferations of Othello, bound together by the descriptions in the play of which they are elaborations. The many Othellos may be regarded as various members of one kind, and the play's descriptions as the essential underlying structure of the kind.[4] The connection between characters and people in which I am interested is that what is a character and what a given character is like are determined by the reader's imagination. Something is a character if the reader can imagine being it, and a character is whatever the reader can imagine its being. The direction of this connection is from reader to character. (A connection whose direction is from character to reader is this : ways in which the reader *can* conceive her own identity are given by the ways in which she *does* individuate characters.)

Characters are figures of speech elaborated in the reader's imagination. This construal sets the stage for an answer to How can people have propositional attitudes toward what they know is not real ? The procedure by which readers relate themselves to characters in such a way that it is not irraiional to have attitudes toward them and feelings structured by the attitudes is given below. Two points should be made at the outset. First, it is a reconstruction; the steps do not add up to a phenomenological description of the reader's activity. The fact that a reader is not aware of performing them does not count against the claim that the steps rationalize his attitudes and feelngs toward the characters. Indeed, knowing how to read stories is a complex skill part of whose exercise consists in the automatic performanee of the steps in question. The elaboration of characters is part of the design, not the performance, of the experiment and may not itself be automatic. What in the best case *is* routine, however, is the readers's identification with the characters. Second, the best case is that in which the reader approaches the work with the intention of gaining a lively appreciation of the world defined by the work and its characters. The reader may fail in her appreciation, for she may fail in the performance of one of the steps in the procedure.[5] The point is that what is detailed below does not purport to reconstruct every reading of works in which there are characters, only those readings by which the reader presumes to "enter" the world of the work.

My claim, in brief, is that people often do, for example, fear for Desdemona, shudder when Oedipus raises his wife-motther's broach to his eyes,

and worry when Tom Sawyer and Becky are lost in the cave. Since people do have feelings toward characters, it is possible for them to do so. What must be shown is how these feelings are possible and why it is not irrational or in some other way wrong to have them. For one could argue that to respond feelingly to art is to mistake art for life and so to err about the nature of art. Or one could say with Plato that the feelings of characters trace themselves in the souls of the responsive audience, and the audience, not realizing that feelings are contagious and are the more likely to intrude into daily life the more they are enjoyed in art, errs about the strength of the (harmful) effects of art,

The following reconstruction of the activity of whoever reads with the appropriate intention explains the possibility of having the feelings and clears the way for explaining their rationality. The rationality of feelings occasioned by literature will appear in the light of an answer to the question why literature matter's to us. John Searle is, I think, right when in *Expresssion and Meanings* (Cambridge, 1979) he says, "part of the answer (will) have to do with the crucial role, usually underestimated, that imagination plays in human life, and the equally crucial role that shared products of the imagination play in human social life." Strong claims may and have beed made about the role of imagination in knowledge and in the determination of the attitudes we may or ought to take toward what we know in part and seek to know in whole. So far as the claims are good and we care about the attitudes we take or the way we position ourselves, and so far as imagination is esentially involved in appreciating most literature, the feelings arousd by the exercise of imagination in reading are not irrational and are more basic to knowing than most people realize.

IMAGINATIVE IDENTIFICATION

Every story is presented through a sensuous medium and involves the acceptance of certain conventions or priniples of make believe of the sort that, for example, constitute the children's game of making believe that globs of mud *are* pies.[6] Similarly, the audience makes believe that the stage set in the murder scene in *Othello is* the state bedroom in the citadel in Cyprus. It is not sufficient, however, to explain the rational possibility of having feelings about Desdemona to say that one makes believe that Desdemona is real; the forthcoming account might be seen as an analysis of the notion of making believe that Desdemona is real, though it were, I think, better seen as an analysis of of our sense of reality.

My strategy is to reconstruct the procedure of identification in three steps : the first involves a play of imagination and is the primary focus of the paper, the second and third involve conventions about characters, experiences and their worlds, respectively. The steps are :

1) We imagine that we are in the position of a particular character and that the descriptions that constitute are true of us, and we discover how we find being there.
2) We infer that how we find being in the character's position, under its descriptions, is how the character finds it.
3) We adopt the character's point of view.

Step One is the performance of experiments in which the reader imagines that he or she *is*, in turn, different characters in the predicaments in which the work presents them. Since characters just are sets of descriptions, a reader's imagining that he is a character C in predicament P is no more than his imagining that the descriptions, including "being in P," true of C are true of him. How does one do this ? One answer is that as a first step the reader lays aside what is particular about himself; he does, in short, what David Hume says in "Of the Standard of Taste" *Four Dissertations* (London, 1757) a literary critic must do, namely, consider himself as a "man in general" and forget his "individual being and peculiar circumstances." This will not do, however, if it means that the reader in one fell swoop imagines away all of his particularity. For he would then have to imagine that he was "man in general," which is impossible. Only what is particular can be imagined. A more acceptable answer is that the reader imagines away only those characteristics that he does not share with the character, and in the same act imagines having the related characteristics of the character. The reader, then, never imagines himself a blank slate on which a character's individuality is inscribed.

Even so, what is it for, say, an American woman philosopher to imagine away her nationality, gender, and profession and in the same act to imagine being a Moor and general of daring skill whose latest conquest, of Desdemona, will prove to be a rare defeat ? The answer may be read from the way in which what the reader is to imagine is expressed. That is, she is not simply to imagine being a general or, even, a noble Moor in the service of the Venetian state (Othello's identification in the list of dramati personae.) She is to have imagined by the play's end being subject to all of the descriptions licensed by the text and her reading of it. The reader is to have imagined being Othello, and Othello may be characterized as one who, unused to defeat,

is defeated by his love, as he may not be characterized as simply one who is a Moor, a man, a general. This is to say that the imaginative experiment is to be designed, where the design is what is usually called interpretation. Although the text delivers the descriptions that constitute the character piecemeal, each piece is embedded in the network of relations that is the text and is not, therefore, merely an item on a list. For example, the first mention of Othello is in I, i where Roderigo says to Iago, "Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate;" he is introduced as the object of another's passion. By the end of the scene, the reader has seen Othello as the thief as of both Iago's lieutenancy and Brabantio's daughter; she has seen his effects on the lives of others and, moreover, seen them only from the others' points of view. Nonetheless, she can imagine being "one who is the object of Iago's fury at having been passed over for promotion and Brabantio's unbelieving and outraged grief at having been deceived past thought by Desdemona."

The reader's understanding of any one description is enriched as she receives more and more descriptions. The character is built up out of its descriptions as the play unfolds, and the reader's experiment consists in performing the imaginative acts in the order in which the play presents their raw material. Othello's unhesitating and sure "Not I; I must be found : my parts, my title, and my perfect soul shall manifest me rightly," made in reply to Iago's suggestion that he hide himself from Brabantio, resonates with the reader's knowledge of how Brabantio and Iago feel toward him and the plans to which these feelings have given rise. The words resonate weakly if the reader knows only that they are angered, but strongly if her knowledge of their anger is result of having imagined being Iago, denied the post even after three notables interceded, and Brabantio, unable to comprehend how the daughter who shunned all suitors would willingly go to the "extravagant and wheeling stranger of her and everywhere" and willing himself to renounce fatherhood rather than understand.

When Othello appears, the reader is in position to imagine being Othello rather than being merely the object of Iago's hatred. The difference is that in the normal case a character knows (would know were it actual) what it is doing, whereas it need not and usually does not know all that the reader knows about it. For example, Othello does not, and the reader does, know that Iago hates him, and if the reader has imaginatively identified with Iago, she knows as well the quality of his hatred and in knowing it, knows how its object, Othello, is hated. Despite this difference, Othello *is* truly one who is hated by Iago as he is one who himself speaks and acts. Now, it might be

thought that since characters are sets of descriptions all of whose members are known to the reader but not to the characters, when the reader imagines the descriptions' being true of her and discovers how she finds being so described, she may not infer that how she finds it *is* how the character finds it. For the reason that the reader's knowing more about the character than it knows about itself muddies the purity of the identification. It is not muddied, however, because the reader knows both that Iago hates Othello and that Othello does not know this. The set of descriptions true of Othello that the reader imagines true of herself, then, includes the description of Othello as one who is ignorant of what he is to Iago. This ignorance is dramatically salient; it is what precipitates the tragedy of Othello.

It might be urged, even so, that the Othello composed of all the descriptions licensed by the play simply is different from the Othello composed of the descriptions Othello could apply to himself and that, moreover, since the reader is privy to the first set by courtesy of the text's author, it is appropriate to distinguish between the authorial construct and the dramatic character, where the former "lives" in the mind of the author whose choices the play reflects and the latter "lives" in the play.[7] On my conception of characters the two are indeed different, for a character is a certain set of descriptions and one is the same as another just in case all of its descriptions are the same. Nonetheless, there are on my conception indefinitely many more than two Othellos; there are as many as there are elaborations of the text, and elaborations need only be consistent with the text and imaginable by the reader. Moreover, the many Othellos do not naturally group themselves into the authorial, those seen from outside the play, and the dramatic, those seen from within. This is not the place to address the many questions of theory raised by the presumption that there is a clear demarcation between what is inside and what outside a work of literature; but it is worth remarking that the tendency to suppose that there is an Othello which is something more than the set of descriptions that Othello could apply to himself may be overcome by the following reflection. It is natural to suppose that a competent reader does not ignore anything that is in the text; but to construct a dramatic character who is just what Othello knows about himself is to ignore much of what is there in the text about Othello. The tendency to think that the reader should concentrate on the Othello-who-is-what-he-knows-about-himself in order to understand the action of the play stems from a spate of assumptions about people's being centers of consciousness and acting as they do from rational choice and plan. We may be better served by literature, however,

if rather than projecting these assumptions about ourselves onto the text we let the text show us how what we do not know about ourselves is prominent among the causes of our actions. Whether or not this is true, I take it that Othello's ignorance of Iago is as much a part of him as are his sometimes destructively mistaken beliefs.

The elaboration of a character, the design of the experiment the reader is to perform in order to realize what it is like to be the character, clearly does not do itself. But having designed and then performed the experiment, the reader knows straight off what it is to be the character she has imagined being. She does not know it from her past experience or her familiarity with psychology or theories of human motivation. Readers' resources, that is, what they have lived through and what they have learned, contribute to their understanding the text's language and their elaboration of its characters; the design of the experiment is a function of the reader's past and her commitments but the actual performance is not. The *act* of imagination may be distinguished from the *object* of imagination and so, then, may their logics be distinguished. Therefrore, from the fact that what the reader brings to the text bears on how she constructs (interprets, elaborates) what is to be imagined, it does not follow that it bears on the performance of the imaginative act. It is precisely because imagination is free in its encounter with literature that literature can make a difference to our lives: it wrenches us from our empirical selves and shows us what we may be, by showing us what we are in the imaginative identification. If our vision is bound by what we are, then everything we look at simply shows us what our histories and our bodies have already "written" there, and imagination cannot change our lives by showing us what we might not have thought to dream. Imagination need only have made this sort of difference to the life of some one reader for those who say that we see in situations, literary or real, only what we have written there to be shown to be wrong. The burden is on the versions of so-called reader response theory according to which readers cannot escape their historically conditioned selves to show either that literature, properly read, does not thrill or that it does not do so precisely by freeing readers from the contingent conditions of their lives.

EXPERIENTIAL IMAGINATION

Not only is the reader's knowledge of what it is like to be the characters not determined by the resources she brings to the text, neither is it a form of propositional or practical knowledge, nor is it a skill. It is not a kind of knowing

that thus and so is the case, nor of knowing how to do anything whatsoever, including how to reason about practical matters. It is knowledge by acquaintance, where the acquaintance occurs in imagination. Call it knowledge by imagination.. What is known are experiences, those the reader has as the result of performing the experiment. The performance at the same time provides the character's subjective side and apprises the reader of what it is like to be the character. It is the performance of an act of *experiential* imagination.

Imagination is experiential when what is imagined is that one is actually participating in a scene rather than merely watching it, even than watching a scene in which one is oneself a participant.[8] Imagining that one is part of a scene is a matter of visualizing the scene and oneself saying and doing certain things in it. This sort of imagination, call it *propositional*, provides a view of its object from the outside; there is nothing ineffable about its object, and the object is fully expressible in a proposition. The other sort, whose objects are experiences, which are not expressible without remainder in propositions, is not a matter of visualizing a scene outside of which one stands as spectator but of imagining being the character in an act which creates, and in creating reveals, the character's subjectivity.

Only when a work is read with the intention of the reader's gaining a lively appreciation of its world are certain sets of its descriptions enlivened by her feelings. When a work is enlivened in this way, the reader has exchanged certain of her descriptions with those of the character, and the interweaving of reader with character produces something new : a momentary union of reader's feelings as matter and character's descriptions, the texts' words, as form. To the question whose experiences are know by imagination, the answer : characters', when and so far as they are subjected to the creative activity of reading. When they are full blown by the enlivening imagination, they may be said to exist in a strong sense of "exist," strong but nonetheless different from the ordinary sense in which existence is location in space-time. When characters are not full blown, remaining fignres of speech figuring, nothing, they will be said to exist in a weak sense. (There is no weak/-strong distinction within the ordinary sense.)

What I am here saying about characters, Roland Barthes in *The Pleasure of the Text* says about the text :

TEXT means TISSUE; but whereas hitherto we have always taken this tissue as a product, a ready-made veil, behind which lies meaning (truth), we are now emphasizing, in the tissue, the generative idea that the text is made, is worked in a perpetual interweaving; lost in this tissue - this texture -

> the subject unmakes himself, like a spider dissolving in the constructive secretions of its web.[9]

Texts are made in the act of reading, characters in the act of imaginatively identifying with them, and neither is made once and for all but is composed anew with each act of reading. A moment's reflection on lhe *plurality* of characters shows how they may be said to "dissolve" into the reading that partially constitntes them. On the one hand, the character is no *one* thing, for its words must be elaborated (interpreted) in some way and may be elaborated in many ways. On the other hand, the character conceived as the union of text's words and reader's feelings is no one *thing*, for it lasts only as long as the reading lasts : it lasts a moment; whereas things have temporal spread.

The raw material from which text and character is made is already contained in the reader as the possibilities of her thought and feeling, but the reader may be said to "unmake" herself in the course of making text or character by imagining away whatever is true about herself that conflicts with what is true about the character. She unmakes herself like Barthes' "spider dissolving in the constructive secretions of its web". The unmaking is no more permanent that what is made—each lasts a moment only. It may be explained as the performance of an act of experiential imagination, an act of being, say, Othello, now persuaded that his wife has been with Cassio and being moved to say :

> Ay, let her rot and perish, and be damned tonight, for she shall not live. No, my heart is turned to stone, I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world has not a sweeter creature. She might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks. (IV, i)

The reader experiences the complexity of Othello's state when she imagines being Othello as she reads these words. She does not *imagine* experiencing the state, she actually experiences it : what she imagines is that she is not herself but is Othello. The reader realizes the pathos of proof that his heart is stone—it hurts his hand when he strikes it—which shows that it is not stone at all though he clearly wishes it were. For then it could not be moved by a sweetness so powerful that it might command emperors and does command Othello. He is in thrall. And the reader knows this by an act of experiential imagination, a kind whose salient characteristic is its transparence. To imagine having an experience is, necessarily, to have it.[10] Therefore, when one imagines being the subject of an experience, one has the experience. The truth of this reveals a similarity between experiences occasioned by art and those occasioned by life : the difference lies in the ontological status, not the descriptive content, of their causes and objects. Since experiences are the experiences they are by virtue of how their causes and objects are properly to be

described, identity of this descriptive content of the structuring causes and objects encountered in arts and in life entails, other things being equal, identity of structured experiences. Richard Wollheim puts this nicely in "Imagination and Identification" when he says " I act to myself someone feeling something or other and then react to this....by experiencing the feeling".

Readers know, too, what Othello cannot comprehend and what must, then, break him. He cannot reconcile her perfidy and her beauty, and wishes not that Desdemona were dead, for memory of the contradiction would stay, but that she had never been :

O thou black weed' why art so lovely fair ?
Thou smell'st so sweet that the senses ache at thee.
Would thou hadst ne'er been born ! (IV, i)

Again, how can the beautiful not be good :

Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write 'whore' on ? (IV, ii)

Desdemona could not have been made to be whore. But she is whore. Against all nature and all reason. Othello is undone. We here respond to what no mind, not Othello's or ours, can comprehend : to Desdemon's being both black and fair, foul and sweet. We know Othello's state by performing the experiment whereby we imagine being him; the knowledge is by imagination and is no more the Othello would know, were he real. However, in order to perform the experiment we must specify to ourselves what we are to imagine and in doing so come to know what Othello would not be likely to know : that his giving proof that his heart is stone proves that it is not, that what is breaking him apart is his inability either to give up one of two contradictory beliefs, and the feelings to which they give rise, or to reconcile them. The kind of knowledge readers have about the reasons and causes of Othello's state is propositional; their knowledge of its texture and its feel is not.

Again it might be objected that the reader's knowing more about Othello than Othello knows about himself makes what the reader feels in imagining herself to be Othello different from what Othello would feel were he real. For the reader's beliefs are different from Othello's. But, again, feelings are caused as much by what is true about a person, even when the person does not know what is true, as by what a person believes about himself. What is true about Othello is that he is ignorant of Desdemona's innocence. This truth is *written* in him, even though he does not *read* (name) it, and it is what makes him do what he does in the scene that begins with his saying :

It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars !

It is the cause. (V, ii)

Othello takes the cause to be the falsity of the woman before him on the bed, which cause should not be named because too horrible; we may take it to be his false beliefs about the woman, which cannot be named because not known. Indeed, it is the falsity of the beliefs, it is that and why they are false, that demands explanation. And the reader, no more than Othello, has privileged knowledge about why Othello writes "whore" in his mind,

The fact that the reader has characters' experiences, and does not imagine having them, provides the key to the solution to the world-world problem. The reader, watching Othello's jealousy work in him, fears for Desdemona as Desdemona fears for herself :

And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then
When your eyes roll, Why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel I fear. (V, ii)

For the reader has Desdemona's experiences by identifying with her in imagination and is not, therefore, in the irrational predicament of standing in the actual world and having feelings toward what is known to be not real but is, on the contrary, in the wholly rational predicament of feeling fear as she, all ignorant of its causes, watches the passion attack and master her lord. "She" here names the union of text's words with reader's feelings and spans the distance between actual and fictional worlds. Moreover, the fact that the reader has the experiences as Desdemona and not as herself shows how the reader may be said to unmake herself, dissolving into the character whose subjectivity she provides in reading it. (The full blown character, in turn, may be said to dissolve into the reading that partially constitutes it. By the law of transitivity, then, the reader dissolves into the reading. She becomes her reading, or *she reads herself.* A nice conflation of reader and text.)

TWO CONVENTIONS

Step Two is the inference that how the reader finds being in the character's position is how the character finds it. If the reader, identifying with Othello, feels thus and so she may infer that Othello feels thus and so just in case the now familiar two conditions are satisfied. The first is that the elaboration of the character, which is logically prior to the performance of the experiment, be consistent with the words in the text. The second is that there be an imaginative identification between reader and character. The identification must not be confused with acts of the projection or introjection of one self into another.[11] The identification achieved in reading is free of the self whose story is part of the

causal order of the world and part of whose story is its unconscious beliefs and desires, written in the mind of one who cannot read them. Projection and introjection are not. They are so far from being free of the performer's historical and contingent self that they are determined by ,and performed in the service of that self.

Nor is the imaginative identification with characters to be confused with bonds forged by readers' sympathy for them. Feeling sympathy for others entails having certain beliefs about them; since the relevant beliefs about characters are false or meaningless because characters do not in the ordinary sense exist, it is irrational to feel sympathy for them. Even so, it is not irrational for the reader, identifying with Desdemona as she watches Othello's passion consume him, to feel fear. Having imagined being the character and inferred that how she finds being in its situation is how the character finds it, the reader is said to have the character's thoughts and feelings.

It does not follow, however, that whatever the reader discovers upon performing the experiment is what it is like to be the character with whom she is identifying. Step Two is an inference and it may go wrong. It goes wrong whenever one of its conditions violated. Nonetheless, the fact that the reader can be wrong does not show that there is one or only a few ways of being right. There is nothing to privilege an elaboration of Othello, nothing prior to the text's being read called " what it is like to be Othello " which is such that its realization in the reader's experience counts as knowing what it is like to be Othello. However the reader finds being in the character's position, so long as the experiment in which the discovery is made is performed properly, *is* how the character finds it. To perform Step Two is to accept this convention.

Step Three is the adoption of the points of view of the characters with whom one has identified. Points of view are not only "the essence of the internal world," they are views onto a world, points from which a world is viewed, as well, and each point defines a unique perspective on the net-work of relations that is the work. The descriptions that partially constitute Desdemona are embedded in the text but can be considered apart from it, whereas the perspective on the play that she defines cannot be considered apart from the play : a way of seeing the world cannot reveal itself in isolation from the world seen. To adopt Desdemona's point of view, then, is to enter the world of *Othello* in a way that simply imagining her characteristics applying to oneself is not to enter it. The reader does not by the very act of imaginatively identifying with Desdemona enter the

play's world; she must perform the further act of adopting Desdemona's point of view. In the moment of identification, the reader spans the distance between the actual world and *Othello's*; she refers herself into the play. Talk of spans and references presupposes space over or through which the spanning and referring occur. At the moment of the reader's adoption of a character's point of view, however, the space vanishes; there is at the limit only the world of the play.

Moreover, this further act is such that one cannot imagine performing it, one can only perform it. There is nothing that could count as imagining looking at the world from so and so's point of view, For what could one do to imagine looking at the world through Desdemona's eyes other than imagine being Desdemona and look at the world, which look is, perforce, from her point of view ? All lookings, imaginings, knowings, in short, all mental acts or states embody the point of view of the agent; this point is, then, not itself the object of a mental act but is an essential feature of the agent. Similarly, the point of view of a character is not the object of the reader's imagination but is a feature of the reader who adopts the character's point of view, entering the text at the the site occupied by the character.

There are at least as many perspectives on any one character in a work as there are other characters that bear some relation to it, and the various perspectives on a character figure in the reader's elaboration of it. To enter the text at the site occupied by Iago in the first scene of *Othello* is to be swept forcibly along his lines of sight to Othello. The elaboration of Othello is, then, a partial function of how Iago sees him, and how Iago sees anything whatsoever is a function, in turn. of how Iago is elaborated. Characters mirror each other endlessly, one character's perception of and perspective on another helping the reader to elaborate the other. There is no truth of the matter and, hence, no end of the matter. For there is no reality of Othello, Desdemona, Iago behind the words whose apprehension would elicit from the render the cry "That's it !"

Characters mirror their worlds, as well, and there are as many worlds of the play as there are 'characters' perspectives on its situation and as many entrances into the network of worlds as readers' elaborations of characters - in each case, indefinitely many. One may say of the play what Roland Barthes says of language, having called it an endless galaxy of signifiers : "to take (any one) entrance is to aim, ultimately, ... at a perspective whose vanishing point is nonetheless ceaselessly pushed back, mysteriously opened."12 Step three is adoption of the characters' points of view and acceptance of the convention that the world of the play *is* the unbounded and many dimensioned complex of

second-order constructs out of characters' viewpoints, where characters are themselves first-order constructs out of the play's language and its readers' inner lives.

THE SOLUTION

Characters are plural, their points of view various, the worlds determined by characters' sightlines themselves plural. The only limits on what is created by the act of reading are the figures and structures of language, on the one hand, and readers' capacities of heart and mind, on the other. Since readers can think and feel only what they can *experientially imagine* thinking and feeling, and since the difference between performing and *imagining* performing a mental activity lies in the reality and fictionality of its causes and objects, readers' capacities for mental life are coextensive with the reach of their imaginations. Language and imagination, not the relatively stable set of the reader's culture and self, are what limit how a text can be read. Texts may be read more or less aggressively, where the most aggressive reading is the one that does violence to the reader's beliefs that are authorized by her culture and its traditions. Such readings involve radical elaborations of characters, elaborations that contradict or are incommensurable with culture's traditions.

Were readings limited by these traditions, there hardly could be readings that unsettle them. But there are. They are utterly different from the readings invited by what Roland Barthes calls the text of pleasure :

> the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a *comfortable* practice of reading,

and are, rather, what are invited by what Barthes calls the text of bliss :

> the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language.*13*

Yet there could not be readings so violent as to annihilate culture and reader. For there to be reading at all there must be the structure of relations that determine meaning and the energies of readers whose performance af acts of reading make something significant out of what, until staged, remains permanent possibilities of meaning.

Take now the structure of relations that is *Othello* and take the world determined by one reading of the play, a world in which are interwoven the language of the text and the feelings of the reader. This construct out of the reader's activity may be responded *to* only when the reader has ceased her reading/weaving and stands once again in the actual world as the individual whose own story unfolds in

that world. The reader who now, no longer imagining herself Desdemona, feels fear for Desdemona is irrational, forgetting the stricture imposed by the axiom of reference : one cannot refer and, therefore, cannot direct propositional attitudes into a fictional world. The space between actual and fictional, closed by the fullness of reading, is opened as soon as the reading stops. The reader engaged by the fullness of reading, is not in the position, while reading, to respond to what is read.

The economy of mind is such that if one is actually feeling Desdemona's fear, one cannot at the same time be host to feelings structured by beliefs about one's own predicament in the actual world. In imagining that one is Desdemona, one imagines away (brackets, withholds assent from) the beliefs about one's own predicament that would enable feelings about it. So far as readers entertain their own feelings about anything whatsoever while they are reading, they have not entered the world of the play as one or another of its characters. A fortiori, so far as they have their own feelings toward characters and events within the play they show themselves not to have entered its world and, therefore, to be irrational for believing, for example, both that Desdemona is in danger and that Desdemona does not exist. They transgress the space between actual and fictional.

One might object that it is precisely this transgression that causes the peculiar pleasures of reading. Roland Barthes, for one, traces one of its pleasures—bliss—to such a transgression :

> Many readings are perverse, implying a split, a cleavage the reader can keep saying : *I know these are only words, but all the same....*(I am moved as though they were uttering a reality)....I know and I don't know, I act toward myself as though I did not know.[14]

He would not deny the irrationality of knowingly responding to what one knows is not real but would claim instead that the experience of bliss consists sometimes in the dizzying defiance of the Law of Contradiction. This is not an objection to the impossibility of attending both to being (in imagination) Desdemona and to being oneself, however. For were it not impossible, there would be no defiance of the laws of logic in trying to be both and the attempt would not have to fail, as it does on Barthes's account, ending in the momentary loss of (the sense of) self characteristic of bliss. I conclude, then, that response to the work constructed by the creative activity of reading cannot, on pain of irrationality, include response to characters within the work. To respond to characters is to treat them as though they were real, existing independently of the network of ralations in which they inhere.

Works of literature are, finally, structures of language, and characters are figures of speech. I am not sure, therefore, that the distinction between fictional

and actual is the most perspicuous one with which to approach the question of the rationality of the reader's shudder, made as she watches Desdemona offer to Othello a series of four deals whose rapid succession reflects the speed with which knowledge of her fate is dawning upon her :

O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not !

Kill me tomorrow; let me live tonight !

But half an hour !

But while I say one prayer !

Othello cannot deal with her; she has ceased to exist for him as anything but the product of a maddened fancy, and he says as he stifles her, "It is too late"—to negotiate. Desdemona, accepting the moment, switches the allegiance that had until then belonged wholly to Othello and steals the prayer Othello would not grant, crying :

O Lord, Lord, Lord.

The Lord replaces her lord, who now no longer exists for her; when asked who has done this deed, she answers :

No body. I myself. Farewell !

No real man has killed no real woman, and the reader who shudders is irrational or in some way deceived or self-deceiving.

No. For the disntinction between actual and fictional cuts deep into language and the mental life only on the supposition that there is something completely independent of language and mind : that nothing *is* language unless it stands in a privileged relation to what is language-independent, and that thoughts and feelings are true and rational only when they too stand in a special relation to what is mind-independent. What is outside, then, is held to be actual, and language, thoughts, and feelings that lack the proper relation to the actual are fictional or false.

However, if we set aside the vexing question of the truth and the details of this supposition and look at language and mind themselves, we can find there no distinction between actual and fictional. Ignoring the piety that the only possible reason for being interested in language or mind is that they represent the real we go back to Othello and Desdemona, figures of speech that figure our mental life, and heed the objection that they are nonetheless figures that represent people. Logically tied to what they represent, Desdemona and Othello are fictional because the people they purport to represent do not exist. Again no. Characters are logically tied to what they figure, reader's inner lives, not to any other thing they try and fail to represent. The text presents them to us, and we accept them by allowing them to structure our mental acts and attitudes. If there is failure, it is not characters'

failure to represent an independent real but readers' failure to allow the characters to 'play' their thoughts and feelings during the reading.

Yet, the objector continues, because characters are fictional, we can refuse to accept them, as we cannot refuse people whom life presents. I reply that where accepting others is allowing them to figure our feelings, to inscribe themselves on us, to make a difference to us, it is clear that we can and often do refuse to accept people present to us. He continues ; but we cannot refuse the physical presence of other people; we cannot walk through them. Nor can we walk through walls. We "accept" matter, but it does not, *qua* matter, bear the press of mind and cannot therefore inscribe itself on us. To accept matter is to yield to what is brute and dumb; this is not what we do when we accept people and characters. In sum, characters as well as people can play our feelings, and we can refuse to let people as well as characters "write" themselves on us or, with us, co-author our lives. Characters, fictional in not inhabiting space-time (the time of their stories is not the time of our science), are not pale images of people and are in ways important and interesting no different from people.

Nonetheless, there are those who insist that the differences are all in all. I think that the intuition on which their insistence is based is this : characters cannot look at us and so cannot acknowledge us. This is true. But it is not cause for lament. For whoever looks at us sees and shows us what we are : characters show us what we may be. Like Yeats's

> . sages standing in God's holy fire
> As in the gold mosaic of a wall,

they are the singing-masters of our souls, teaching soul not to wait for the look of the other but to clap its hands and sing.

> .... and louder sing
> For every tatter in its mortal dress,
> Nor is there singing school but studying
> Monuments of its own magnificence.

Structures of language and figures of speech are, too, monuments of soul's magnificence, forms that may be enlivened by readers who do not take the form of their minds

> from any natural thing,
> But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
> Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
> To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
> Or set upon a golden bough to sing
> ....

"Sailing to Byzantium"

Such readers take their form from what art has wrought and sing- the lives of the characters whose forms they have taken. And the fear of Desdemona is no more nor less wonderful than the song of the golden bird.[15]

Notes and References

1. Strictly, it is the statement expressing what is believed that is false or meaningless. Depending on one's theory of reference, a statement using a name with no referent is either assigned the value "false" or said to express no proposition and, hence, to be meaningless.
2. The first solution is in Kendall L. Walton, "Fearing Fiction," *The Journal of Philosophy* LXXV (1978). Walton's quasi-fear is a state similar to real fear, different in that its causes and objects are only make-believedly real. This is like my fear felt while and so far as the reader is imaginatively identified with, for example, Desdemona. Walton requires the truth of the associated beliefs for the correct ascription of fear to an agent, I do not. It is hard to see how to decide this issue without spelling out and justifying a theory of the emotions. My account has an advantage over his with respect to the particular emotion or quasi-emotion felt : I can explain why the reader's understanding the plight of Desdemona causes fear, rather than some other state; he, by his own words, cannot. The second solution is in Eva Shaper, "Fiction and the Suspension of Disbelief," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 18 (1978), an article gives no purchase to the reader's imagination, Moreover, Shaper holds that second-order beliefs about characters entail first-order beliefs about the falsity of the second order beliefs : it has been argued that the prominence of the first-order beliefs would make it psychologically impossible to be moved by characters. This argument belongs to David Novitz, "Fiction, Imagination, and Emotion," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* XXXVIII (1980), an article with which I in large part agree. Its thesis that "one can properly understand fiction if one responds in a way that enables one to be moved by it : to feel its tensions and to identify emotionally with its characters," where the full response involves the imagination. We differ about the degree of creativity involved in reading and the consequent privilege of certain interpretations : where he says the reader should think his way into the author's world, I would say into the characters' worlds, and when he says "to the extent that (the reader) follows the authorial descriptions, a reader is said to understand ... ... the

work," I would say that the reader is not limited to interpretations that follow logically from the given descriptions but only to what does not contradict them.

3. "Identifiying Subjects," *American Philosophical Quarterly* XIX (1982).
4. Nicholas Wolterstorf, *Works and Worlds of Art* (Clarendon, 1982) considers fictional characters as "person-kinds" Desdemona is the Desdemona-in-*Othello* kind, a kind having essentially all the properties indicated of it by Shakespeare in the world of *Othello*. Wolterstorf either supposes that the descriptions in the text clearly indicate particular properties or has the problem of identifying what of the various and perhaps conflicting properties indicated by given descriptions are the essential ones.
5. I consider how one can go wrong in identifying with another in "Empathetic Identification," *American Philosophical Quarterly* XV (1978).
6. Kendall L. Walton, "Pictures and Make-Believe," *The Philosophical Review* LXXXII (1973) distinguishes imagination and make-believe on the ground that one can imagine virtually anything, whereas make-believe is tied to the things of the world : one makes-believe of something real that it is something else. Make-believe may be governed by principles, then, as imagination may not. I use the notion of imagination because there is not, I claim, a principled or fixed connection between the descriptions of a character in the text and the ways the reader may elaborate them, no fixed connection between the signifiers in the work and what they signify.
7. If one defines literature as what is representative of authorial acts of mind, then of course something could not be literature unless there were an implicit author and nothing could be a character unless it were the first-level manifestation of a second-level authorial intention. Whoever holds this conception of literature must acknowledge that *there are* author's constructs. (If she acknowledges them but does not find them interesting, she is one step down the path to framing a different conception of art.) The soundness of this conception of art turns on how good its proponents can make their claims about the artist's originating the work. The notion of origin is essential because that of intention is not adequate to making something art. An artist's intending that a work reflects choices he has made is not sufficient to make the work one of art; for it might reflect his choices in spite of his intention that it do so. For example, I may intend to close the door and put my hand on the knob when the wind closes it, Intended to close the door and did something to that end, after which the door was closed. But we would not say that I had closed the door.

Even so, one might say that were there no conceptual tie to a deliberate choice of some one, a given work would not be counted a work of art. Fair enough, but this allows that the choice be of a reader/observer, one who chooses to regard an object or event in a certain way. There is no escape from the artist, one might insist; to regard anything as art is to see it *as though it were* an embodiment of artist's mind. *This* is precisely what those who argue for the existence of God from the design in the universe say, and one who would say it should be mindful of Hume's arguments against the inference from the appearance of purpose to the existence of (even an implicit) one who purposes,

8. This kind of imagination receives rich discussion in Bernard Williams, "Imagination and the self," *Problem of the Self* (Cambridge, 1973) ; Richard Wollheim, "Imagination and Identification," *On Art and the Mind* (Allen Lane, 1973) : and Zeno Vendler, "Vicarious Experience," presented to the American Society for Aesthetics (New York, 1978).

9. Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York : Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975) 64.

10. Wollheim, in "Imagination and Identification" begins by saying that "it is a mark of the character whom I centrally imagine (imagine from its point of view) that in imagining what he does I also imagine what he feels and thinks : that his actions are liberally and appropriately interleaved with his inner states in the flow of what I imagine" and asks how imagining someone feeling something Is related to feeling that thing. He concludes that to imagine *a person or character* having an experience is to have it, whereas I say simply that to imagine having an experience is to have it. Wollheim is committed to the view that the content of any imagining corresponds to a thought. and to imagine anything is to imagine the corresponding thought to be true. The thought corresponding to my imagining being someone else is, he claims necessarily false if the thought is "I am that someone else." Wollheim, intent on explicating what is imagined by reference to corresponding thoughts, suggests that the simple "I am that someone else" be replaced by the complex though describing me possessing the properties of the person I imagine myself to be. This thought, though false, is a possible object of Imagination: one can imagine counterfactual, but not logically impossible, statements to be true. Now, this is precisely how I understand imagining myself to be another : imagine that the properties of the other are mine. The content of the imagination is explicated *but not exhausted* by reference to the complex thought (that the other's properties are mine.) For the reason for engaging the imagination in this way (what wollheim calls the master thought structuring the imaginative act) is to discover what it is like to possess the properties in question. This is en experi-

ence not a thought, and is not expressible in a proposition.

11. These are primitive identifications. Freud introduced the notion of introjection; introjection consists in the infant's identifying himself with certain figures in the early environment, and the identification is consummated in a phantasied act of oral cannibalism. Melanie Klein claimed that there are in Freud's work seeds of another notion, that of projection. "In projective identification the individual experiences, first, a splitting off of a part of the person and then the forcing of it .. ... into another object.... .... with the aim of possessing and controlling it." Wollheim, "Imagination and Identification," 76.

12. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (New York : Farrar, Straus and Girouz. 1974),

13. Brathes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, 14

14. *Ibid.*, 47,

15. This article is a sequel to "Identifying with Characters in Literature," which appeared in *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics* IV (1981).

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Descartes a la mode : Nietzsche and Valery on Cognition

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Much of Nietzsche's *Will-to-Power* can be read as a refutation of Descartes' *cogito* : in summing up Cartesian thinking about cognition, Nietzsche finds that Descartes has missed the point. "If one reduces the proposition to 'There is thinking, therefore there are thoughts,'" notes Nietzsche, "one has produced a mere tautology : and precisely that which is in question, the 'reality of thought,' is not touched upon-that is, in this form the 'apparent reality' of thought cannot be denied. But what Descartes desired was that thought should have, not an *apparent reality*, but a reality in itself.[1]" Reality in itself, according to Nietzsche, is never discussed or analyzed because people are content with the surface image of things and with their superficial understanding of their own thinking processes. It is in this region that Nietzsche's thought most exactly coincides with that of Paul Valery.

According to Valery, the difference between the creative mind and the mundane mind (for Valery there is a viable and not a specious difference between the two) is that the creative mind sees new questions or unanswered questions in the familiar object. The child asks questions about the familiar object or everyday event and receives in answer a simplistic, received, and monolithic interpreta-

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tion of the object or event. Eventually, the child no longer asks or even sees the questions since all queries seem to have been answered. In truth, Valery argues, the cliche, the dogmatic response, is substituting for any authentic interrogation of the object. And language, rather than being the medium of communication and elucidation, precludes any confrontation with the object itself [2].

The common epithet applied to Valery (an epithet which bears out Valery's argument since it prevents us from reading him in an unprejudiced manner) is that of "aesthete." But Valery is not an aesthete, any more than Nietzsche is; both men are led to their positions and to their startling rhetoric by disgust with the traditions which gloss over the perception of the present, a history which binds and blindfolds. We see this frequently in Valery's Nietzschean letters to Andre Gide :

Everything is false ! The dissonance splits the ears of my understanding. Language is poor as a widow. Nature is ugly as if a second rate artist had made it .... Now nothing is created .... Mystery doesn't exist, alas ! ... . Causes and effects don't exist ! We create them, Gentlemen ! So what does that prove ?

Style ? Go and watch them fabricate it if you want to vomit ! Artists, you will go mad ! Bourgeois, you are stupid ! .... .. Who made the universe ? I did ! God is an atom that radiates. God is principle ... . God is an Idea. God is ! So God is a few words. That is not much .... [3]

This bombast is the result of despair over an unreflective people. Following Nietzsche's observations to their natural end Valery is convinced of the complete subjectivity men have of their environments and the superficiality of that knowledge,

Valery's notebooks are filled with the analyses of his own thought processes: commenting on his own habit of awakening daily at four in the morning to write in his notebooks for a few hours, Valery writes that "to think otherwise than everybody else (simply by recasting everyone's observations) comes almost as naturally to anyone who feels uncommonly wide awake when most others are asleep. From this I formed the habit of considering the common view of things as an expedient, always untrustworthy" (*Moi*, 333). If Valery is sometimes given to excess in expressing such sentiments, particularly in his notebooks and in his letters to close friends, the excesses are almost always due to his attempt to recast the everyday manner of looking at things. "*Each one of us must perhaps do his utmost to find, or render false, everything that is accepted true by all* - - at least in his private usage" (*Moi*. 333 ; Valery's italics). Like Nietzsche, Valery calls for a revaluation of all values.

When Valery or Nietzsche issue this call for revaluation, they are rejecting the common Western mode of thought which seeks definitive answers or single interpretations to questions, problems, or things. It is easy to domesticate the world by seeing it simply, in only one way. But, as Ruediger Grimm has noted, for a thinker such as Nietzsche "there can be no 'correct' interpretations, if by correct we mean 'corresponding exactly to reality,' because Nietzsche denies that it is meaningful or consistent to talk about any such realm of stable, self identical entities to which statements could correspond." 4 In Nietzsche's view, and in Valery's we either misunderstand or fail to see the world because of our tendency to simplify, organize, and categorize.

Nietzsche argues for "perspectivism," which he opposes to positivism Perspectivism holds that facts do not exist ; only many interpretations, "countless meanings," exist for phenomena (*WP*, 481) It is not enough, Nietzsche writes, to say that interpretations are subjective ; even the subject which makes he interpretation is a *persona*, a thing which is posited, invented by the thinking subject. This subjective interpreter is limited by the horizon of his understanding and experience, his "I"-concept (*WP*, 482). "Our particular case is interesting enough : we have produced a conception in order to be able to live in a world, in order to perceive just enough to endure it - -" (*WP*, 568). These facts and concepts which we take to be the world are distortions since they are wrenched from context, removed from the world. Grimm explains that by "turning our experiences into facts, concepts, truths, statistics, etc. we 'kill' them, rob them of their immediacy and vitality and embalm them, thus transforming them into the convenient bib of knowledge which furnish our comfortable, predictable, smug existences" (*Grimm*, 32).

Nietzsche refers to this process as the 'Egyptianism" of philosophers caused by their hatred of becoming. The major culprit for the transformation of things of the world into "conceptual mummies" is language, according to Nietzsche. Language is the deceptive straitjacket which makes permanent and static the concept of a thing, which hands it over to tradition, and which becomes a barrier to understanding. We accept the apparent for the real (*TI*, 36). Language relies upon the notion of correspondence and stability which Nietzsche rejects.

Valery, whether on his own or through his reading of Nietzsche, came to much the same conclusions about language. "I have observed for a long time," he wrote in a letter to Gide in 1901, "that the philosophers have scarcely stirred in reality any but the meaning of words, So they teach us nothing clear about the mind but only the interior or relations of language, this language resting on

nothing" (*Moi*, 230). This language which is signifier without signification is extended by Valery to form a response to the Cartesian *cogito*. If all we know of the world is through language, and if that is the only medium through which we may communicate, it is in fact standing for the world: however inadequate, it is all the world there is. But in that case, our understanding of the world and our knowledge of the self is always a fiction. Valery complains that it is not possible for him to be sure "that the entity Mr. P. V is anything but a 'convenient notation' " (*Moi*, 215). Our language allows us to make up the world. As Nietzsche notes, "We believe in reason : this, however, is the philosophy of gray *concepts*. Language depends on the most naive prejudices" (*WP*, 522). Nietzsche's and Valery's arguments run along lines similar to those found in the well-known "Dreaming Argument" in the First Meditation of Descartes, but while Descartes could resolve his doubt in the Sixth Meditation by more or less rejecting his First Meditation premises, Nietzsche and Valery remain sceptical[6].

For Valery, resolving the problem is made even more difficult because it is necessary to use language to interrogate language and the represented object is continually receding from the representation.

My profession obliges me to use a great many vague *words* and to give the appearance of speculating about them, by way of them.

For me they have no value. I do not really think with these philosophers' words - - which are generally expedients of everyday language to which a specific importance is given, and from which we try to draw some superior knowledge - - attributing a meaning to them, considering them as problems in one attitude of mind while using them as adequate means in another.

For instance, what is Time, Beauty, etc. ? Your *pause* is not promising. A can understand B, who uses these words. But *A does not understand A*. (*Moi*, 318).

Or as Nietzsche points out more strongly, "Compared with music all communication by words is shameless; words dilute and brutalize; words depersonalize; words make the uncommon common" (*WP*, 810). Yet we are willing, according to Nietzsche, to believe in truth, in the concept of stable meaning and shared understanding our representations out of fear and laziness. It is necessary for us to use a "psychological reduction," whether we believe that the world does exist or that the world doesn't; in either case we are relieved of doubt (*WP*, 585). It is impossible to avoid belief : "Believing is the primal beginning even in every sense impression : a kind of affirmation the first intellectual activity ! "[7]

Similarly, for both Nietzsche and Valery, it is impossible to use sens impression to verify existence of anything or any sort of ontological status : ike language, the senses can only falsify and simplify. Both sensory data and one's interpretations of sense impressions are already, in effect, coded in the same manner as language; the senses, too, are "mummified" by concepts and are removed from the real. We believe that we know the thing when we have discerned its. outline, its surface, or its symptoms, while our conceptualizations are merely the impoverished shell of the real.

At the same time, Nietzsche and Valery find themselves trapped in a corner. Just as it is impossible to critique language without using language and so participating in the same sort of inevitable errors you are pointing out, it is impossible to declare that those who believe in some sort of stable reality and interpretation are wrong unless one has in mind a stable interpretation which is right. As John Wilcox points out, "Nietzsche cannot consistently upbraid his enemies in this kind of language if he is a non cognitivist himself. Accusing your enemies of ignorance has no point unless you believe in the possibility and desirability of knowledge. There is no bite to the charge that someone has blinded himself to reality unless it is possible to do better - - to see reality for what it is. Nor does it make sense to criticize others for building their values on falsehood unless values can and should be built on truth. But these are precisely the kinds of accusations Nietzsche often makes."[8] Valery, too, could not devote himself to his voluminous ruminations on the self, the mind, thinking, and so on, unless he was certain that he could move in the direction of truth; there must be confidence in the existence of a truth to be discovered if the investigator is to go on so tirelessly in his investigations.

It is interesting that the Valery of the *Cahiers* is something other than the public Valery, the Valery of commissioned prefaces, introductions, book reviews, public lectures. He is less interested in purely aesthetic questions (if there is such a thing as purely aesthetic) than one might suspect. He is intrigued by more fundamental questions : what separates my mind from other minds ? How do I know when I am actually experiencing something and when I am imagining it ? What types of thinking are there ? In Judith Robinson's assessment, "the only kind of writing which really interested him was that which taught him something new and positive about his own mind, and hence about the functioning of the mind in general[9]."

Valery tried to work out these questions in such writings as the Teste cycle and the Leonardo essays. The hero of Valery's studies of Leonardo is not the

historical Leonardo, but the intellectual master, the Renaissance man (with all of the traditional connotations of that term), the epitome of thinking as reconstructed by Valery. Valery's Leonardo is not a man who once lived, but he is instead a set of attributes ; Valery names this set "Leonardo," The mind of this construct "Leonardo" is admirable, to Valery, for the way in which it perceives details and makes connections. Valery's Leonardo is neither crushed by nor unaware of the myriad details of the mundane. By contrast, as Glenn S. Burne has explained in his article on Valery's Leonardo, "Our minds cannot bear to consider with any sustained precision each element of our perception. Hence, most of us are forced to lump things together into conventional classifications[10]." Valery's understanding of the artist Leonardo, the artistic or creative mind, seems to mirror Nietzsche's analysis of the artist in *Will to Power*.

Nietzsehe finds that this "distinguishes the artist from the laymen (those susceptible to art : ths latter reach the high point of their susceptibility when they receive; the former as they give - - so that an antagonism between these two gifts is not only natural but desirable. The perspectives of these two states are opposite : to demand of the artist that he should practice the perspective of the audience (of the critic - - -) means to demand that he should impoverish himself and his creative power - -" (*WP*, 811). The artist's "physiological states" mould the personality of the artist ; these states are *intoxication*, an "*extreme sharpness* of certain senses" (this is an explosive condition which enables the artist to see the extraordinary in the familiar while experiencing an exuberant need to communicate this fresh impression to others), and, unfortunately, from Nietzsche and Valery's perspectives, the "*compulsion to imitate.*" This last quality prevents "laymen" from becoming artists. This compulsion is "an extreme irritibility through which a given example becomes contagious - - a state is divined on the basis of signs and immediately enacted - - A kind of deafness and blindness towards the external world - - the ralm of admitted stimuli is sharply defined" (*WP*, 811). The artist is understood to be stronger than those who are not artists, simultaneously more susceptible to sensual stimuli yet capable of rising to meet his artistic demands without collapsing under his greater awareness of the world. Nietzsche contrasts the artist with the "scientific man." "Compared with the *artist*, the appearance of the *scientific* man is actually a sign of a certain damming up and lowering of the level of life (- - but also of strengthening, severity, hardness, will power)" (*WP*, 816).

In his Teste cycle [11] Valery creates a character who is the Cartesian man and the interface between the artist and the scientific man. Certainly Monsieur

Teste was inspired through Valery's reading of Descartes; the *Discourse on Method* provided the scaffolding for Valery's major prose work, "I reread the Discourse on Method recently," he wrote to Gide. "It is certainly the modern novel, as it could be written. Notice that the later philosophy rejected the autobiographical part. Yet this is the point to take it up again, and then we shall have to write the life of a theory, just as we have too often written that of passion" (*Moi*, 161 ; letter of 1894). But Teste was not simply an interesting way for Valery to discuss a philosophical theory. Teste is actually a test of Valery's thinking up to that point in his life ; his installments of the Teste cycle over a forty year period represent Valery's thinking on thinking ; Teste was his workbook as much as the *Cahiers*. He explained that he was at loose ends after completing his degree, "despair in every direction." Then "I passed through my inner 18 Brumaire which led to the advent of 'Mr. Teste.' ... This meant that I resolved to think with rigor - - to not believe - - to consider as null and void everything that could not be brought to total precision, etc. ... ... (*Moi*, 7).

Teste, to Valery, represented a personal and philosophical revolution, as well as a genre experiment. He spoke sometimes of Teste as Flaubert spoke of *Madame Bovary* and *Bouvard and Pecuchet*, Just as Flaubert wished to write a novel with nothing as its subject, Valery wanted to write "A kind of novel (without intrigue)" (*Moi*, 183). After all, Valery noted in "Remarks About Myself" that he and Teste were both bored by events. "Events are the foam of things," he declares. "*It is the sea that interests me.* We fish in the sea, we sail on the sea, we swim in it ... .. But the foam ?" (*Moi*, 290-91). The Teste cycle is therefore "the history of a man who thinks" (*Moi*, 180). At one and the same time, Valery identifies with Teste ("My mother sends her salutations to you both. I was about to forget to insert it out of '*Testisme*'," *Moi*, 187) and idolizes Teste for his dedication to studying the intellect and the uncommon ("Monsieur Teste's question : 'What is a man's potential ?' became my whole philosophy," *Moi*, 306).

Teste and Leonardo were devices through which he could revaluate all values. Teste and Leonardo, Valery explained in an interview, "are pure mental exercises like little novels of mental research and analysis" (*Moi*, 344). These works were ways of breaking out of the prison, the fact that "man is a closed system in relation to knowledge and acts" (*Moi*, 306). Valery explained that through working out Teste's questions, he was led to "outlaw all Idols. I sacrificed them all to the one that had to be created to subjugate the others, the *Idol of the intellect.* My *Monsieur Teste* was its high priest" (*Moi*, 295).

Valery recognized that his authentic being (one of Valery's notebooks was titled, in English, *Self Book*) was covered with what Glenn Burne has called the "habitual encrustations of personality."[11] It was necessary to overcome or transcend the trappings of his personality and the public and private images of Valery. Valery viewed people as protagonists in novels of their own writing and as secondary characters in the novels everyone else was writing. Only someone like Teste could overcome this state through his rejection of cliche. We see this, for example, in the scene with Teste at the Opera, where the spectacle for Teste is in the audience rather than on the stage. Going to the opera is a ritual activity in which behavior must conform to group expectations ; Teste, in studying groups within the larger group of the audience, in treating the auidence as grist for his speculative mill; is violating and altering the ritual and raising himself above it ; Teste valorizes the individual (such as himself) over the group from which he maintains a safe distance. According to Nietzsche, the "basic error" is "to place the goal in the herd and not in single individuals But now one is attempting to understand the herd as an individual and to ascribe a higher rank than to the individual - - profound misunderstanding ! ! !" (*WP*, 766). Teste can do nothing about the group, the crowd, the herd ; he cannot change it at all ; he can only observe, classify, organize, and transcend ir, through his interpretation. "Ultimately," Nietzsche notes, "the individual derives the values of his acts from himself ; because he has to interpret in a unique way even the words he has inherited. His interpretation of a formula at least is personal : as an interpreter he is still creative" (*WP*, 767).

The Teste cycle, the Leonardo essays, the *Cahiers*, and the correspondence with Gide, and most of Nietzsche's writings as well, are in fact polemical works which attempt to revise the commonplace understanding of the role of artists and philosophers, to make philosophers become *as* artists, to awaken the reader to possibilities of interpreting the world which have been overlooked. In his marginalia to his essay "The Method of Leonardo" Valery writes : "Why artists are useful : they preserve the subtlety and instability of sensory impressions. A modern artist has to exhaust twothirds of his time trying to see what is visible - - and above all trying not to see what is invisible, Philosophers often pay a high price for striving to do the opposite."[14]

Notes and References

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, with commentary by walter Kaufmann (New York : Vintage Books, 1968), p. 268, section 484. In keeping with current practice in Nietzsche scholarship, I will hereafter note only section number and not page numbers when referring to this work. This text will be cited parenthetically as *WP*.
2. See Judith Robinson, "Valery's view of Mental Creativity, "*Yalé French Studies*, 44 (1970), 9-18.
3. Valery, letter to Andre Gide, August 10, 1891 ; this letter is published in Paul Valery, M*OI*, Collected Works of Paul Valery, vol. 15, trans. Marthiel and Jackson Mathews (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 1975), p. 119. This anthology will be cited parenthetically as M*oi*.
4. Ruediger Hermnn Grimm, *Nietzsche Theory of Knowledge* (Berlin and New York : Walter de Gruyter, 1977), p. 110. This valuable book will be cited as *Grimm*. Grimm makes the point that "Nietzsche's view of reality (the will-to-power) is such that all that exists is an ever-changing chaos of power-quanta, continually struggling with one another for hegemony. Nothing remains the same from one instant to the next. Consequently, there are no stable objects, no 'identical cases,' no facts, and no order. Whatever order we see in the world, we ourselves have projected into it. By itself, the world has no order ..... Yet metaphysics, logic, and language - - inded, our whole conceptual scheme - - is grounded in the assumption that there is such a stable order" (*Grimm*, 30). See also James D. Breazeale, *Towards and Nihilist Epistemology : Hume and Nietzsche* (New Haven : Yale Univ. Press, 1971).
5. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Gods* in *Twilight of the Gods and the Anti-Christ*, translated and with introduction and commentary by R. J. Hollingdale (Baltimore : Penguin books, 1968), p. 35.
6. See Margaret MacDonald, "Sleeping and Waking," M*ind*, 62 (1953),

202-15 ; O. K. Bousma, " 'On Many Occasions I Have in Sleep Been Deceived' - - Descartes," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*, 30 (1956-57), 25 44 ; and Margaret Dauler Wilson, *Descartes* (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 13-31.

7. *WP*, sections 506-516.
8. John T. Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche : A Study of his Metaethics and Epistemology* (Ann Arbor : Univ. of Michigan Press, 1974), p. 58. Wilcox also notes that Nietzsche frequently praises the senses (pp. 48 ff.). But praising the senses is not a rejection of Nietzsche's attacks on those who believe in the senses without recognizing that their understanding of sense-evidence is both directed and clouded by their preconceptions, and other misleading factors.
9. Judith Robinson, 'The Place of Literary and Artistic Creation in Valery's Thought, "*MLR*, 56 (1961 . 499.
10 Burne, "An Approach to Valery's Leonardo, "*French Review*, 34 (1960), 28. Note also Valery's own statements on the Leonardo essays : " . . . . I agreed to write an article on Leonardo .. .. Knowing very little about Leonardo .... I accepted for the reasons stated above and I imagined a Leonardo of my own" ("Autobiography," *Moi*, 8) ; "*Vinci* is at its worst ! It's a bore I showed it to Drouin with pleasure ...., who at page thirteen made me observe that I was not talking about Vinci. I knew it only too well. But what can be said of such a man ?" (letter to Gide, Feb. 4, 1895, *Moi*, 172) ; "To me, Leonardo was a kind of intellectual hero standing far above the disorder of my feverish probings" (Valery interview, *Moi*, 344).
11. Tho Teste cycle refers to all of Valery's various vignettes and fragments of writing concerning Monsieur Teste. These have been very conveniently gathered and well translated under the title *Monsieur Teste*, Collected Works of Paul Valery, vol. 6, trans. Jackson Mathews (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 1973).
12. Burne, "An Approach to Valery's Leonardo," p. 33.
13. On this scene see Charles Whiting, *Paul Valery* (London : University of London/Athlone Press, 1978), p. 58. I am in essential agreement with the reading given by C. A. Hackett, "Teste and *La Soiree avec Monsieur Teste*," *French Studies*, 21 (1967), 111-24 :

"One might ... . take the stage to represent the world or life, which the audience watches with fascination while Teste and the narrator remain aloof and withdrawn, absor-

bed only in each other. I think, however, that we are intended to ses not the stage and performers, but the entire scene, the opera building and all that it includes, as the world. And to represent the world in this way, as a finite, closed system of relationships, is in line with the whole of Valery's thought. Thus, Teste and the narrator, aloft in the box' may symbolize the conscious mind, or the consciousness, which can understand, and impose a pattern on the vital but blind forces, the 'betise,' and the instincts that exist beneath it" (p. 120).

14. Valery, *Leonardo Poe Mallarme*, Collected Works of Paul Valery, Vol, 8, trans. Malcolm Cowley and James R. Lawler (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), p. 19.

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Sentence Length as a Stylistic Device in Selected Texts by Stefan Zweig

YISHAI TOBIN

This paper is an attempt to apply certain basic principles connected to various linguistic approaches of analyzing language and literary texts to a specific stylistic phenomenon found in selected *novelien* by Stefan Zweig. Our underlying assumption is that stylistics, i.e., the interface between linguistics and literary criticism, may prove to be an interdisciplinary tool to shed new light on the description and perhaps even the explanation or interpretation of literary texts. In particular, we will view the role of sentence length in general and the specific effects "short or simple" sentences may have in the creation of a discourse or text, as they interact with longer more complex sentences.

Let us begin, however, by briefly presenting our theoretical position with regard to the linguistic background related to our approach. The cornerstone of our view of language comes directly from the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1959) and the fundamental distinction he makes between *langue* and *parole*. *Langue*, or language, is a self-contained whole, a system of elements and relations of linguistic signs. *Parole*, or speaking, is the actual execution of speech

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by the individual speaker. As pointed out by Enkvist (1973 : 36) students of style are very divided as to whether stylistics should be regarded as part of the realm or either, (Vinogradov 1963) both, Dolezel (1960), or possibly neither (Coseriu 1962) (Rosiello 1965). For this paper we shall follow the approach maintained by Hirsch (1967 : 232-233) and earlier by Naert (1949) that a text represents a segment of *parole*. *Langne*, the hypothetical *sign* system, contains the potential words, sentences, and sentences-forming principles of a language ; *parole*, on the other hand, represents the actual composition of the sentences *or utterances* in a discourse or text itself. The corpora we shall be using composed or actual sentences distinguished by their grammatical simplicity or physical length, must therefore, be viewed in the context of this paper as a representation of Saussure's notion of *parole*.[1] We would like to further point out, however, that we, like Saussure, do not necessarily view the sentence as the basic hypothetical unit of language, but rather the linguistic sign, the composite of form and meaning (Saussure's *significant* and *signifie*) and view sentence iength as a potential linguistic or discourse signal or cue along the lines of world order or non-linear constituents such as 'active' vs. 'passive' distinctions etc. In this respect we differ emphatically in principle with the more formalistic approaches to language, linguistics and stylistics professed to by Chomskian transformational - generative approaches who view the sentence itself as the hypothetical unit of linguistic analysis and who attempt to reduce the generation of sentences to the realm of a speaker's competence as the primary goal or linguistic and stylistic research.

Bearing our humanistic non-formalistic communication-oriented approach in mind, we would now like to present our definition of the notion of the text. We are sympathetic to many of the basic ideas expressed by Barthes (1979) with regard to the distinction between a work and a text ; although we have chosen an independent approach and mode of analysis in this paper. Thus, similarly to Barthes, we view the concept of text in the following ways :

1. As opposed to a work, a text is a "new object" which can only be "obtained by the displacement or overturning of previous categories".

2. A work is a physical object, a printed mass occupying space. A text, on the other hand, is a "methodological field". A text exists as a discourse inseparable from its language. An analysis of a text, or any intelligent reading of a text, is an active process, a production, an experience. A text cuts through an entire work, or even a set of works.

3. A text cannot merely be subdivided into *a-priori* categories whieh can then be apprehended into various sets or hierarchies.

4. The notion of a work is 'an institutional category' belonging to the civilization of the Sign (as originally defined by de Saussure), while the text lies within the field of the signfier, but not as a first or initial stage of meaning, but rather as an "aftermath" (an *après-coup*) in the form of a "serial movement of dislocations, overlappings and variations". To fully comprehend a text requires a "liberation of symbolic energy". Unlike a work, which is "moderately symbolic", a text is "radically symbolic", or as expressed by Barthes : "A work whose integrally symbolic nature one conceives, perceives, and receives is a text (Barthes 1979 : 76)

5 A text represents a plurality which is not composed of more than one meaning, or ambiguous meanings, but rather a "plurality of meaning, an irreducible plurality:'. Barthes views a text as a cloth, a woven *textus.*

6 A text is "multiple and irreducible; it emerges from substances and levels that are heterogeneous and disconnected; but they form part of an irreducible whole. The combination of textual elements is unique, and the text can only exist "only in its difference .... its reading is semelfactive (which renders all inductive-deductive sciences of texts illusory) .. there is no (formal) (Y.T) "grammar" of text. . ." (Barthes 1979 : 77)

7 A text should be studied as an intricate network whose combinative factors and elements and their varying contributions to the formation of a whole requires the active collaboration of the reader and the writer.

It is with these principles in mind, that we have chosen to view several of Zweig's *novellen* as a discourse or text. The need to study linguistic (and textual) phenomena from the point of view of a discourse, i, e., as a suprasentential system was first recognized in modern linguistic theory by Zellig Harris (1952) as a means to fully understand how the various phonological, morphological,, syntactic and semantic elements or language interact in natural or context-oriented settings. This common-sense, implicitly communication approach, however, was thrown into the periphery of linguistic (and stylistic) thought due to the Chomskian revolution, mainly in the United State and to a lesser extent in Europe. Today, in Europe, particularly in Germany and Austria, the 'new wave' of linguistic analysis is *Textlinguistik,* text linguistics, which analyses the text, the larger unit, the unit which may break down the barriers of individual words, in order to discover linguistic genera-

lizations about the sounds, forms and meanings, which constitute utterances or sentences, i. e., the micro-textual or stylistic level. Text linguistics can be used to learn the particular stylistic elements employed by a specific author, to determine various genres or text types, *Textsorten*, as well as to determine the various registers involved within these different textual categories scientifically i.e., *Gattungsforschung*.[2]

In this particular stylistically oriented paper we will discuss the range of structures, specifically the interaction between long (i.e. compound or complex) versus short (i.e. simple) sentences, and the particular discourse and textual role and scope of the latter as expressive signals in Zweig's novellen. We will try to show now the shorter sentences are interwoven with longer sentences within the *textus*, the cloth, in order to :

(a) present the reader with an abstract summary of portions of the developing plot, i,e., highlighting certain aspects of the developing action as well as presenting aspects of the setting of the text. Barthes refers to this proiaretic code, the action or the narrative. We would like to point out, however, that the short sentences by themselves actually inchoately serve to present or introduce initial actions, events or settings which are then further elaborated upon —either directly or indirectly—by the longer sentences which follow. It is, in reality, the contextual interaction between the short sentences and long sentences within the woven *t xtus* that gives the complete message of the story. We are emphasizing, however, the trigger-like action and subsequent direct or indirect reaction of the short sentences *vis-a-uis* the long sentences in a text. The short sentences by themselves only have textual meaning with regard to their interaction with the long sentences.

(b) The short sentences in their interaction with longer sentences pointedly reveal the emotional or mental state of a particular character or set of characters, thus presenting the readers with a terse, personalized point-of-view or momentary *weltanschauung* of a particular character at a particular point or within a particular context.

(c) The linear repetition of a selected short sentence or a set of similarly worded short sentences within the same text may serve to create a certain sense of cyclicity within a text. This phenomenon also includes the recurrent use of interrogative sentences. Barthes refers to the use of these interrogative utterances as the hermeneutic code, or the reformulation of the

problem the text represents. It is claimed by Coward and Ellis (1677 : 55) that "these two codes (the proiaretic and hermeneutic) are responsible for giving the text its forward impulsion, moving it from point to point towards its inevitable end."

By pointing out these recurrent *motifs* and the repetitive use of questions and their possible answers; which may appear later in the text, in both long and short sentences, we are taking into account the text as a larger unit, a discourse, and are making a preliminary attempt to go beyond the individual sentence or phraselevel, noting the interaction between sentences of various lengths that may appear in different segments of a given text with regard to their orienting effect as to the state of mind of the key characters, as well as the interaction of the events pointed to by the short sentences and elaborated on by the longer sentences.

We would like to add that the criteria for selecting short sentences were grammatical and graphic. We have syntactically selected what are traditionally referred to as 'simple sentences', i.e., those sentences without subordinate clauses or syntactic complementizers, usually consisting of a single 'subject' and 'predicate' (with possible 'object') (typical S-V-O sentences) which appeared in the narrative or descriptive parts of the text and not within conversations which were marked off by quotation marks or inverted comas. The graphic criteria upon which we based our selection were punctuation, having chosen utterances whose end-points were ' full-stops ' as opposed to semi-colons, colons, dashes, or other graphic devices to connect adjacent or juxtaposed phrases or clauses in order to create 'complex' or 'compound' units larger than the traditional 'simple sentences'.

We will first illustrate the three textual roles we have outlined above for short or 'simple sentences' from the story *Brennendes Geheimnis-The Burning Secret.*

The story begins as a young adventurer arrives at a resort. He spots a woman and a child and is immediately attracted to the woman and decides to use her son as a ruse to become acquainted with the mother. The child is immediately taken in by the unexpected attention lavished upon him by the older man. The plan begins to work and the mother reluctantly becomes romantically interested in the younger man. After the trap has been set, the young baron proceeds to try to rid himself of the now superfluous inatfuation of the young boy. This part of the story is first seen from the Baron's

point of-view, the boy's reaction and the eflect this all has on the mother. Let us see now the short sentences reflect the setting action and mood or the characters in this part of the story.

Spring was in the air.	(setting)[3]
Then he (the baron) decided to go into the dining room.	
His vexation swelled into impatience.	
Utto (the baron) asked for a newspaper.	
The hunter scented the game.	
His feelings were roused.	(he sees the woman
The hunt was on.	and child & is
A test occurred to his mind.	attracted)
A zest has been added to the adventure.	(hunter-game-trap)
He (the lad) was constantly getting in the way.	(The baron befriends
This amused the baron.	the child to get
The lad blushed with delight.	to his mother).
The baron chuckled.	
He had at length guided the conversation to the Mother.	
The baron soon won Edward's (the lad's) confidence,	
Children are so easily hoaxed.	
The baron grinned as Eagar ran off.	
An intermediary had to be found.	
The acquaintance was made.	
That night Edgar slept badly.	(Edgar's reaction)
Of a sudden he stiffened.	
This was Edgar's finest hour	
Our huntsman was again on the alert.	
The boy went pale with alarm.	(subsequents events)
The child hesitated.	
She had to relax a moment.	(the mother becomes
Her nerves were on edge.	entangled in the web.
Now she felt secure for the first time.	
She softly closed the door.	
Then she shrank back in the room.	
Now she understood for the first time.	

Let us return to the summary of the plot. Edgar, the child does not comprehend the change in attitude that has now overtaken both the young

baron and his mother, but soon he realizes that he has been used as a subterfuge. He cannot, however, understand why the two adults are inventing all sorts of lies and "treacheries" in order to get rid of him so that the can be alone. He is determined to figure out their mysterious secret. His way of gaining revenge is to act defiantly, anger the adults, and ruin their new relationship. This part of the story primarily revolves around the boy's point-of- view - Let us look at our data of short sentences :

She was outraged by Edgar's extravagant (behaviour)
The baron slept badly. (cf. Edgar slept badly)
The baron answered (the boy) rudely.
Still it was up to him to try.
Edgar waited patiently.
Edgar went scarlet with mortification.
He would show her his defiance.
It was difficult to do so.
Still they continued to ignore him.
He clenched his childlike.
Was this a plot ? (question - hermeneutic code)
Were they in league against him ?
Anger flashed in the child's eyes.
What was going on ?
Restlessly he let his *eyes* wander. (recurrent - eye theme)
She was tired and wanted to be alone.
Edgar and the baron were left alone.
The baron strode off. (cf. The baron grinned as Edgar ran off).
The baron was alarmed.
Edgar left, momentarily happy.
He (Edgar) waited. (This was to be the ultimate test Edgar's this time, not the baron
They sat together at the table.
He became uneasy.
Now for the test.
The baron had cheated him.
He, too, held a secret.
Edgar henceforth felt uneasy. (cf. He became uneasy)
The baron was the first to feel the boy's fangs.
The baron was surprised. (cf. Edgar's surprise

What could this mean ? (at the baron's attn.)
War had been declared. (hermeneutic code)
He (Edgar) waited. (cf. he waited)
Distrust grew stronger within him.
Both appeared to be in fine fettle,
The moment had come. (war had been declared
But their (the baron's and his mother's) lips remained serene. now for the test).
They stood in bunch. (the three of them)
One of them lay in ambush of the others.
The baron tried again.
Edgar looked at him contemptuously.
That was his decision. (war had been dec-
The boy had successfully wet-blanketed their conversation lared)
Edgar grinned and left. (the baron grinned
as Edgar ran off)

Let us now return to our summary of the plot. The baron and Edgar's mother decide to strike back. They find all sorts of ways to get rid of Edgar, first by sending him to the post-office and then by sending him off to bed early so that they can be together at night. Edgar, however, after having a confrontation with his mother, escapes from his room and follows the couple while they romantically stroll down the darkened paths of a nearby forest. He reaches the conclusion, after seeing them huddling together in the shadows, that the baron is trying to murder his mother. He misinterprets his mother's emotional entreaties to her young suitor when they return to the hotel and attacks the amorous baron, whom he assumes is going to kill his mother. The following day the baron disappears to Edgar's mother's mortification. She demands that Edgar write a letter of apology to the baron. An angry scene ensues between the boy and his mother where Edgar slaps his mother. Shocked and guilty at what he had just done, the boy runs away by taking a train to Baden where his grandmother lives. He finds his mother waiting for him when he finally arrives at his grandmother's house after making a detour in the municipal park where he observed an amorous couple His father then arrives on the scene and questions the boy to get to the bottom of what had happened. Edgar understands his mother's uncomfortable position and fabricates a story for his father. Both his grateful mother and the boy himself now realize that he is no longer a mere innocent child. Let us now look at how this is reflected in our data ;

But time pressed.	
Edgar took the letter gingerly.	(Attempts to get rid
Then he went with both letters.	of the boy)
Edgar stormed to the post-office.	
He was stiff with rage.	(cf. "stlffened anq
He tortured his brain.	"anger" sentences)
The baron was non-plussed.	
Edgar had by now quieted down.	
She loitered on the way	
She opened the door quietly.	(cf. she softly closed
He (Edgar) appeared absolutely sure of himself.	the door)
This invoked her in a quandary.	
They stood facing each other.	(cf. they stood (together)
Edgar grinned.	in a bunch) (The baron
Mother darkened as he meditated.	chuckled)
He listened if anyone were coming.	
A woman's laugh was heard below.	
Their usual place was empty.	
Nowhere were they to be found.	
What were they saying ?	
He couldn't understand lt.	
She laughed.	(cf. Edgar laughed,
	the baron chuckled).
why did they leave the hotel ?	(hermeneutic code)
Where were they going alone at night ?	
A silver sheen lay in leaf and blade.	(setting)
But where was the couple going now ?	(hermeneutic code)
They both went unconcernedly on their way.	(partial answer)
Suddenly they stopped.	
A strong anger overcame him.	(cf. anger sentences)
The child was overcome with anger.	
What did he want of her ?	
Would they glance up ?	(hermeneutic code)
No, neither glanced up.	
The two stepped into the doorway.	
Edgar withdrew from the window.	
He was terribly shaken..	

He strained to listen.	
Edgar snivered.	
What more does he from her ?	(cf. what did he
Why was he so frightened ?	want from her ?)
What could it be ?	(recurrent hermeneutic code)
They had gone further in the dark.	
Where is he taking her ?	(hermeneutic code)
He was maddened with alarm.	
No one around had heard him.	
No one had heard.	
She gave no response.	
Edgar bit his lips.	(cf. but their lips
Her silence puzzled him.	remained serene)
Doubts assailed him.	(hermeneutic code)
What was happening ?	
He couldn't recognize her.	
Hardly a morsel of food could he swallow.	
His mother seemed unaware of his plight.	
His defiance blazed.	(cf. anger sentences)
The boy straightened up.	
He looked around.	
She threatened him with her voice.	
Edgar became angry.	(cf. anger sentences)
The boy sprang fiercely.	
She laughed.	(cf. Edgar grinned,
A cold dry laugh.	the baron chuckled,
This was too much for Edgar.	she laughed).
Then her anger broke loose.	(cf. anger sentences).
Her hand was already raised to his face.	
Her scream brought him back to his senses.	
What was he to do ?	
Where could he flee ?	(questions-
How did one get to Baden ?	hermeneutic code).
How long would the scenery pass ?	
Edgar crept into a corner (of the train)	(cf. she shrank
He looked out of the window dlfferently.	back into the room).

Edgar looked over the edge (of his grand-mother's house) like a stranger	
He approached the door.	
He timidly opened it.	
He listened.	
What did they want ?	(hermeneutic code)
Edgar shivered	(cf. Edgar shivered)
He jumped up.	(cf. Edgar sprang
This was what happened.	(cf. what was happening ?)
The telephone buzzed in the next room.	
He stood there in disgrace.	
His father was a tall man.	
Her face was in a shadow.	(cf. her face darkened,)
Edgar hesitated to reply.	
Would he understand ?	(hermeneutic code)
Edgar hesitated.	(cf. E. waited, E. hesitates
His father looked at him dubiously.	to reply (looking sentences)
His anger was revived.	(cf. He was overcome
Edgar gazed fixedly at his mother.	by anger, etc....)
There was a gleam *in her eye.*	(cf. He looked at him
	dubiously
	contemptuosly
	(*eye* sentences)

Let us now look at the same phenomenon as it appears in another of Zweig's *novellen, Die Gouvernante, The Gverness* :

In this short story two young sisters suddenly encounter a strange situation in their own home involving their governess and a relative of theirs. They discuss the strange things happening around them, but are confused and frightened because they cannot fathom what is actually taking place, they eavesdrop on their unhappy governess and their relative (Otto), overhear arguments between their parents and the governess, observe a visit by Otto, are attuned to everyone's strange behaviour, but still remain perplexed and in the dark about the situation. It becomes evident that the governess is pregnant and she subsequently disappears from their house. The girls' parents had lied to them. Their entire attitude towards their parents, their home, life and the world has changed as they finally understand what has occurred.

Once again, the short simple sentences in this srory provide us with a summary or an abstract of portions of the action, the *mise-en-scene* or setting, the mood of the characters, as well as through their repetitive use or through interrogative sentences, provide a certain cylicity or even reciprocity to the text. The following examples from our data will serve to illustrate this. The first part of the story is primarily a *mise-en-scene* :

The two girls were alone in their room.
The light had been extinguished.

There was no answer in words.
Only a rustle from the other bed.
The other (sister) paused to think.
They were both silent.
The elder spoke with a sign.
She did not finish her sentence.
They both were silent. (cf. same as sentence above).
So their talk ended.
The girls were thinking, or dreaming. (cf. paused to think (the second part of the story indicates their changes in feeling or mood)
Then it became quiet in the room.
They were both uneasy.
They were really afraid to discuss the subject.
They looked down.
The little one pouted.
The little one exclaimed (in alarm).
They waited in the passage, trembling, excited.
Their blood throbbed wildly. trembled with excitement) (hermeneulic code)

What was going to happen ? The third part, the climax, is filled with dialogue - and it is here that the interaction between short and long sentences in the narrative is most obvious)

They stole away.

A footstep. (cf. they stole away)
They stole away.
Into the darkness.
Yes it was Otto.
She coughed.

The elder look perplexed.
The younger spoke eagerly.
The sisters tried to understand.
The younger pressed closer.
The younger was frightfully perplexed. (cf. the elder looked perplexed, recip, cycl
The idea tormented them.
They stared at each other.
But always their curiosity blazed once more.
The governess came in.
But they pretended to be hard at work.
Otto was going away.
Now Otto said good-bye.
The girls were changed beings these days.
She (the governess) was so different.
She kissed the little maid's forehead.
The governess gently bowed her head.
They listened.
But all they could hear was a faint murmur of conversation.
The listeners shuddered. (girls' bodies) (cf. trembling, "shuddering" throbbing"
Then one of the voices was raised. sentences)
It was their mother.
The governess seemed to protest.
The girls listened outside. (cf. the girls listened)
A shudder ran down their bodies. (cf. shuddering sentences
Their mother grew angrier than ever.
What could have happened ? (cf. what was going to
They suddenly realized what was happening. happen ? hermeneutic code
They stood there pale and trembling (cf. "shuddering,
For the first time they suspected the truth. trembling sentences).
The younger was a little a larmed at the bold word.
The stamped her foot.
Tears welled up in her eyes.
The governess came in. (cf. same sentence
She looked utterly worn out. previously before & after
In a tearful voice they conversed. (cf. earlier tearful
They stood there perplexed. conversation - cf.
They preferred to be alone. previous 'perplexed' sen

They preferred to be alone.	previeus 'perplezed' sen
The children felt shunned.	
Bur they were afraid of distressing her.	
They stood there in tears.	(cf. prev. 'standing' tearfuI sentences)
No one dared to say it.	
They stood there for a long time.	(cf. prev. 'standing' sen.)
Their father came back.	
They had to go.	
Then they rushed home.	
Their mother came to meet them.	
The sentence was left unfinished.	(cf. she did not finish
Otto suddenly appeared that afternoon.	ner sentence).
He also was pale.	cf. the governess looked
He was uneasy.	worn out. c.f. they were
No one spoke to him.	uneasy ...) (recip. cycl,)
Everybody shunned him.	(cf. The children felt
He paced up and down.	shunned) (recip. cycl).
Then he vanished.	
No one spoke to the girls.	(cf. no one spoke to Otto)
They said nothing to each other. (closing of story with very short	(cf. previous silence sentences)
They knew everything now.	and not speaking sentences
For one brief day they had grown up.	
They aged by a few years that afternoon.	
They slept.	(cf. they couldn't sleep).

Once again we can see that the short or simple sentences we have extracted from these stories play a certain textual or discourse role together with the longer sentences within the woven *textus* of Zweig's works. The interplay, or the interface of his usual long sentences with these shorter simpler sentences allows him as well as the reader to become intuitively aware of the following phenomena : The short or simple sentences present an abstract or summary of portions of the action i.e. of the proiaretic code, and to a lesser extent present a capsulized setting in certain contexts(both of which are more clearly delineated and defined in the longer complex and compound sentences that fill the text). The short or simple sentences serve to pointedly reveal

the characters' state of mind or mood as the story develops, thus presenting us with a terse, personalized *weltanschaung* at a paticular point in the story's development. The repetition of these selected short or simple sentences within the same text also serves to create a certain sense of cyclicity as well as a feeling of reciprocity (Aphek and Tobin 1981) with regard to the characters' interaction. This is also evident in the author's consistent and frequent use of the short interrogative sentences which run through the entire text. (i.e. the hermeneutic code). Thus, by viewing sentence length as part of a textual communication, we can uncover the macro-textual role these kind of sentences play as part of a larger *textus*, a device through which the author may use language to create a specific effect or message.

We would like to point out that in this preliminary study we have not as yet statistically verified the relative frequency of these various functions we are attributing to the interaction of the short sentences with the long sentences. It also appears that the functional force of these short sentences in their various roles differ in their relative textual effects, which may be directly related to the frequency of their appearance, as well as the particular contexts in which they appear, their particular interaction (either direct or indirect) with longer sentences of the text, as well as the contextual episodic segmentation of the text. Only a more detailed statistically-oriented stylistic analysis of this phenomenon of short versus long sentences may enlighten us as to the frequency and force of this functional-textual phenomenon.[4] I would like to add, however, that I intuitively expect differences in the relative frequency and textual force of the interaction between short and long sentences which will be directly connected to the particular communicative message the author wishes to convey within a particular context. If the textual force of the short sentence-long sentence interaction was equal or could be reduced or regularized to *formal rule throughout an entire text*, then the "communicative effect" of the phenomenon would cease to be (in my opinion) a stylistic phenomenon, i.e., one which varies non randomly, i.e. contextually, in order to perform these diverse functions and roles we have described. Furthermore, being that the interaction between the short and long sentences must (in our opinion) be viewed as a *context-specific* phenomenon, we would hope that the relative force of this interaction would vary from context to context as a linguistic means to produce a specific message based on our view of a language as a tool for textual communication.

Barthes refers to the role of the proiaretic and hermeneutic codes in the following ways : The use of the former, represents the action or narrative, allowing the author or the reader to move from one action to another, constantly opening on previously known narrative actions within the story. An opening of an action presupposes its closing or completion, as well as allowing for the introduction of new characters, setting, or descriptions. It is a process of naming events which can be transformed into the narrative, possibly creating a sequence, an impulsion to finish this sequence and thus guaranteeing the readability of a realistic text as a story. It gives us the ability to define and identify sequences of narrative intertextually. The hermeneutic code, on the other hand, represents a reformualtion of the problem represented by the text. It presents the reader with questions which are to be answered eventually as the text develops. Very often the use of the hermeneutic code serves as a device to delay the answer by reformulating the question at various times throughout the text, thus holding the reader's interest and building up the suspense through a suspended, or a partial response. Together, these codes as represented here by the interaction of sentence length give the text its forward thrust (Coward and Ellis 1977 : 55), but by itself, the use of short versus long sentences is a technique alone and must be supplemented by the cultural, semic, and symbolic codes of the text.

Notes and References

1. The novellen from which we have culled our data include ; *The Burning Secret* (*Brennendes Geheimnis*), *The Governess* (*Die Gouvernante*), *The Invisible Collection* (*Die Unsichtbare Tammlung*), *Leporella*, *Moonbeam Alley* (*Die Mondscheingasse*), *Buchmendel*. *The Impromtu Study of a Handicraft* (*Bekanntschaft mit einem Handwerk*), *Transfiguration* (*Phantastische Nacht*), and *Fear* (*Angst*). The original German pieces were taken from the anthologies *Erste Erlebnis*, *Kleine Chronik*, *Brennendes Geheemnis und Andere Erzahlungen* and *Amok*, *Novellen Einer Leidenschaft*. The English verions which we shall present are taken from the anthology *Kaleidoscope* (translated by Eden and Cedar Paul). We have found

that the phenomenon we shall be discussing appears in the English versions of the stories in a way most similar (if not in greater quantity) to that of the original German texts. We shall not, however, deal with the problems of translation or of the translation of various discourse-macro textual phenomena in this paper. The problems of literary translation from a discourse point of view have been specifically discussed in Tobin (1981), and Tobin (1981a,b). The English data from the stories *The Burning Secret* and *The Governess* will appear in the text and the parallel German data in an appendix.

2. A bibliography of primary sources dealing with textlinguistics can be found in Rabin (1981) and Tobin (1981).
3. We would like to point out that the "referent" (denoted meaning) of "spring" appears in the short sentence. The erotic connotation of "spring" is later developed in the long sentences following the introduction of the referred : "Spring was in the air." A few white clouds, glinting and glowing in the sky, such clouds are seen only in the months of May and June, seemed to be playing at catch-as-catch-can in the blue, only to hide themeselves from the observer's eye behind the scaling mountains, there to embrace and flee. to wave lily-white hand, as it were, then to melt away into nothingness, reappear, and finally to settle down as night-caps on the neighbouring hills."
4. Most statistically oriented studies in sentence length (Williams 1969, Buch 1969) were applied to verify authorship as opposed to study the communicative effect of the interrelationship of sentences of varied length within a single text. Hayes (1969) performed a statistical study comparing the various transformations employed in prose texts by Edward Gibbon and Ernest Hemingway. This praticular study also does not attempt to explain the interaction of sentences of different lengths and complexities and their communicative effect in a single text or group of texts by a single author.

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BOOK REVIEWS

John Fisher (ed.), *Essays on Aesthetics : Perspectives on the Work of Monroe C. Beardsley*, Temple University, 1983, PP. × iii + 309, hardbound $ 24.95

M. C. Beardsley's intellectual commitment concentrated on literary theory and philosophy of the arts textends over the four decades last since his association with W.K. Wimsatt in 1946. His multi - dimensional approaches to and the critical analyses of the aesthetical problems have roused sensational reactions among the readers and critics all through. It was extremely necessary that an assessment of his writings, through the various critical responses by different scholars in different times, pro and contra, be undertaken. The present collection of essays by Professor Fisher meets the need timely and most successfully.

Contributors to the volume are well acquainted with Beardsley's scholarship either as students or as friends, colleagues and readers. The essays contributed, seventeen in number, are arranged in six different sections that may be the general lines along which Beardsley thought and wrote : the philosophy of art, aesthetic experience, art and society, narrative in literature, literature and language, tragedy and comedy. Finally, the editor tags very appropriately a brief but substantial response of Professor Beardsley himself to the essays collected.

In the first section Sibley thinks that Beardsley's views on the importance of critical reason supports aesthetic value judgment. Aagaard - Mogensen analyses the concept of aesthetic quality and Hermerén discusses the twelve different answers to the question - is art autonomous ? The second section comprises three philosophers including Professor Fisher himself who examines the question why Beardsley has not so far provided a complete theory of aesthetic experience. The third section contains Dickie, Dyke and Sparshott. Dickie responds to Beardsley's criticism of his own Institutional Theory of Art and Sparshott argues that pictorial representation is a social practice that is parasitic upon a biological one. The critics of the next section are all exciting ones. Ricoeur establishes the correlation between the concept of narrativity and temporality with the argument that our temporal experience finds

an analogue in the "followability" of a story in its narrative proporties of being forward moving. Chatman distinguishes Beardsley's concepts of theme and thesis. Tormey offers a new analysis of metaphorical meaning, in the next section, which is "eliptical, literally implausible, yet significant counterfactuals". Banfield is of the opinion that literary style may be a suitable object of enquiry for literary theory. In the sixth section McFadder suggests that the source of the comic lies in an "active, independent and productive power" whereas Morawski concludes that 'the tragic derives from *Coincidentia oppositorium* ...."

In his response to these essays Beardsley is characteristically patient, polite, brief but bold and emphatic. He is respectful to the critics for their pointing out , his weakness and humble where he is appreciated.

The critical responses collected in the volume not only offer updated analyses of the views of Beardsley, but also help build distinctive theories on the views in their own right raising, therefore, the volume to a status, far beyond a mere collection of essays by several hands on a particular author, where it achieves a unity of its own in focussing on several basic issues of contemporary aestthetics. Professor Fisher deserves admiration for his manoeuvering dual responsibilities : paying tribute to Beardsley and bringing out an outstanding collection of essays in recent thoughts on theories of the arts.

A. C. Sukla

Hugh Curtler (Ed.), *What is Art* ? Haven Publications, 1983, 220 pages, $ 7. 95 pbk.

This book is the first of a projected series that will examine art and its relation to other aspects of human culture. Each work will be unified by a "focal" essay written by some noted scholar. Other scholars are then invited to submit essays which either directly or indirectly respond to the focal essay. All authors are asked to avoid the jargon of academic philosophy so the reader with no extensive background in philosophy or aesthetics could understand and appreciate a collection of essays making up an integrated whole. Judging from the results of the first book, the series should be excellent.

This is a fine collection of essays, even exciting one might

say—provided one is keenly interested in clear and rigorous attempts to say something interesting about the nature of art and the possibility of defining it. Although this first member of the series closely examines the definitional question in the philosophy of art, the essays also discuss a variety of other interesting and related topics, such as expression, aesthetic value in nature, music as art, and the restoration of painting and sculpture. The focal essay of *What is Art?* is "An Aesthetic Definition, of Art ?", written by the noted aesthetician Monroe Beardsley. As always, Beardsley's essay is provocative and clear. He works his position out with some care, but the analysis is certainly not analytically tedious. First he argues that the task of defining art is important and practically useful for critics, historians of art, and even anthropologists. He then argues against proposals to define art in terms of some skill or in terms of the concept of institution (George Dickie's theory). He also rejects the suggestion that something is art simply by virtue of someone calling it "art". Beardsley's main contention is that a helpful and powerful definition of art can be offered in terms of two central notions : artistic intention and the concept of the aesthetic. "An artwork is something produced with the intention of giving it the capacity to satisfy the aesthetic interest." (p 21) For those who know something about Beardsley's other work in aesthetics, in particular his theory of aesthetic experience and aesthetic value, his explanation of key terms in the definition will come as no surprise. Sometimes experience has a decidedly *aesthetic* character (and here he briefly describes these charcteristics). When we approach paintings, films, etc., we often have an interest in obtaining aesthetic experience from them, a kind of experience we desire and we take to be valuable. From the artistic point of view, an artwork is produced if the artist intends to create "something that aesthetic experience can be obtained from." (p. 21) Beardsley spends the last half of the essay explainig the definition and considering a number of curious examples and possible objections which might be problematic for the definition.

It is impossible in a brief space to convey the richness and depth of all the remaining essays. Morris Grossman's "On Beardsley's Definition" is an "artsy" and ironic philosophizing. Grossman is suspicious of the whole definitional task and its tendency to produce an exclusive and misleading analysis. Beardsley's exclusion of some products from the domain of art "leads to the exercise of power under the guise of objectivity, a more dangerous habit than the exercise of power on the basis of frank preference or antipathy." (p. 38) Also, Grossman thinks that a philosophical method which "presses forth exclusionary tendencies

of definition and analysis" (p. 40) misleads because it implicitly endorses a separation of art and philosophy which must be rejected. Frank Cioffi, in "The Aesthetic and the Epistemic" also directly responds to Beardsley's essay and is doubtful about whether the definitional enterprise is helpful or even needed. His essay is full of critical questions and provocative examples suggesting difficulties with the central notions in Beardsley's definition, the aesthetic and artistic intention. He shows how difficult it is either to "distinguish the aesthetic from the arresting, exciting, soothing or exhilarating," (p. 204), or to "make correct inferences about intentions." (p. 206)

Also included in the volume are "The Object of Art," by David Konstan, "The Reality of Objects of Art," by John Hanke, "Art as Expression," by Jenefer Robinson, "Aesthetic Value in Nature nnd in the Arts," by Nelson Potter, "Music as Art," by Wilson Coker, and "On Restoration and Preservation of Painting and Sculpture" by F. David Martin. I found particularly interesting the following : Konstan's essay, which argues that the aesthetic is more properly located in the character of an autonomous tension-filled object than in aesthetic response or aesthetic intention; Kanke's criticism of the emphasis on intention and his defense of the notion that an artwork is simply "something well-made by humans" (p. 81); Robinson's insightful rethinking of the concept of expression; and Potter's attempt to show that aesthetic value in nature and aesthetic value in artworks are very different.

This book is modestly priced, handsomely produced, and also includes three "photoessays" relating to the problems of definition,expression, and culture and art. I highly recommend it especially for teachers of courses in aesthetics who would like to show students the lively, not dreary character of contemporary aesthetics.

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Joseph H. Kupfer, *Experience as Art*, State University of New York Press, Albany (1983)

The subtitle of this book, *Aesthetics in Everyday Life*, indicates its scope and missioan. Its seven chapters include a lucid exhibition of the aesthetic in the classroom, in contemporary violence, in sports, in sexuality, in the drama of decision making and, finally, in our attitudes towards death. Its author's mission is "to demonstrate how the aesthetic is instrumental for personal, social, even moral values." (192)

Kupfer's recurring theme is educating aesthetically, that is bringing

into awareness both the absence of the aesthetic in contemporary living as well as its potential so that individual and community life will be more responsive, autonomous, and integrated in its habits of thinking, acting, and feeling. His social vision is based on an analogy with an aesthetic object. An individual and a community, like good aesthetic objects, should be complete in themselves, complex, and distinctive, with each of their elements reciprocally modifying and enriching each other. Again, like aesthetic objects, individuals and communities exist for their own sakes, not for their extrinsic functions. Our experience of them is intrinsically valuable because it is "characterized by a certain sort of freedom and active receptivity." (71) In his effort to fully articulate this aesthetic analogy in everyday life, Kupfer takes as his intellectual paitrons Dewey, very decidedly, Socrates, and Kant.

In reading this aesthetic of everyday life one would do well to reflect on the meaning of the frequently used term "aesthetic." Does the aesthetic include *any* felt quality or relation which a person responds to, discriminates, and integrates ? What is the virtue of such an encompassing meaning of "aesthetic ?" Some empirical claims deserve more serious reflection. What is the evidence that, fully considered, this is an age of violence ? Kupfer is quick to place responsibility for individual moral failings, "because his environment has failed to educate." (56) This one-sided emphasis on the failed responsibility of societey,ignoring individual responsibility, corrodes Kupfer's commitment to individual autonomy. "How can individuals educate and integrate their own as well as their society's violent impulses and actions ?" is a question more respectful of Kupfer's basic commitments.

Kupfer offers an aesthetic ideal for making and assessing decisions : "a highest degree of integration but not at the cost of complexity." (159) Freedom, the free play of imagination, which he takes to be integral to this aesthetic ideal requires an allowance for being "unconstrained by practical demands." (159) But since the aesthetic pervades everyday practical life for Kupfer, the conflicts and limits of this free play deserve more thorough attention than he gives it. What morally is the right balance of integration, complexity, and free play of imagination in actions for an individual and society ? This is no easy matter to decide. Should moral ideals even over-ride aesthetic ones, as is so commonly assumed ? The integration of the aesthetic, the moral, and the practical is one that Kupfer offers me more faith than argument. The complexity within violence, sexuality, and sports seems too rich and varied to be easily integrated in theory or practice. Kupfer's insightful analyses of

these complex everyday matters stimulated in me more free play of everyday and philosophical imagination than integration.

On its own merits, but especially in light of the recent educational commission's report "A Nation at Risk" which charges that "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people" (*The Chronicee of Higher Education*, May 4, 1983, p, 11), this book is timely and provocative.

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W. J. T. Mitchell (ed.), *The Language of Images*, 1980, PP. 307 ; *On Narrative*, 1981, PP. 270, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Both the Volumes are book forms of two special issues of the *Critical Inquiry* (Spring 1980 and Autumn 1980, Summer 1981 respectively) that evolved out of seminars organised by the University of Chicago on two dominatingly notorious yet absorbingly interesting concepts of contemporary aesthetics and literary theory.

What is an image ? Derived from the Latin root 'imago' the word means literally a graphic, pictorial representation, a concrete material object and metaphorically extends to regions, such as mental, Verbal imagery, where pictures have no actual existence. And what is the language of images ? The term language is interpreted in three different senses by the editor : 1) Language *about* images, the words we use to talk about the different visual experiences (or images), 2) images regarded *as* a language for their semantic, syntactic communicative power and 3) verbal language as system informed by images such as graphics, characters or scripts and metaphorically patterning presentation and representation. The volume treats imagery not as the subject of a verbal, narrative or temporalizing interpretation, but as itself the interpretive framework which spatializes the temporal arts of music and literature. Professor Mitchell writes : "One of the most striking features of the modern culture has been the intensive, almost compulsive collaboration between practitioners of the word and practioners of the image..... (as) we inhabit a world which is so inundated with composite pictorial-verbal forms." (P.I) In spite of Professor Wellek's repeated warning that as painting and poetry communicate differently, because of the different media they use, no essentialist treatment of art in general is possible, the present volume seeks to set the Renaissance dictum (Aristotelian in origin) *ut pictura poesis* on a new ground of multidisciplinary and experimental researches . The essays included reflect upon the symbolic relationship between verbal and pictorial modern art and literature. They are united "by a concern with the rules for encoding and

deciphering imagery in the various arts and in the structure of perceptions and consciousness. They investigate the ways we interpret imagery, from representational or illusionistic picturing to abstract patterning... from imagery in literal sense to the various metaphoric extensions of the concept of imagery in literature, music and Psychology."

Including Professor Mitchell's own (editorial introduction and) essay "Spatial form in literature : Towards General Theory" there are fourteen essays in the volume all of which are excitingly interesting. Names that dazzle on the pages are Arnheim, Argan Searle and Gombrich where Mitchell himself along with Abel, Synder and Taylor is refreshingly impressive. Abel discovers new kinds of reciprocation between the verbal and visual arts that replace the Renaissance tradition. Nemerok correlates both the modes of cognition and expression with even the musical form. Argan is interested in the institutionalized unification of word and meaning. Gombrich demonstrates the borderlines between the visual image as an objective record and that as a subjective experience. Mitchell revives the clasic issue of the formalist critic Joseph Frank and widens the scope of literary space to a general condition of reading and textuality, to the experience and analysis of literature.

The second volume marks a radical conceptual revolution in the term 'narrative' during a few decades past. From the Aristotelian definition of 'narrative' as a mimesis of human action to its anthropological view as mythmaking and linguistic interpretation as a particular kind of discourse the term has undergone a connotative transformation that still waits for further metamorphosis and sharper interpretative strategy. The present volume sets a model for such further experiments. In the words of the editor "it dramatizes (and, we hope, clarifies) the most fundamental debates about the value and nature of narrative as a means by which human beings represent and structure the world." The contributors are the finest names in the history of contemporary theory—Hayden White, Jacques Derrida, Frank Kermode, Nelson Goodman, Seymour Chatman, Paul Ricoeur, Paul Hernadi, Robert Scholes and four others representing different schools and systems of 20th century science and philosophy : linguistics, analytic philosophy, existentialism, speech act theory, psychoanalysis and anthropology—all of them believing in two common points of unity that narrative is now rescued from the Aristotelian bondage in going far beyond the territory of literature and that 'narrative' is not simply a genre, it is a mode of knowledge.

White questions the authority for modern historiographers. Turner and schafer suggest that wishes. fantasies and dreams are the mainsprings of human action and, therefore, the sources ot art. For Turner cultural performances generated by ritual are narratives. Paul

Ricoeur presents a Heideggerian concepts of "narrative time" by suggesting that all narratives reflect the existential nature of time and confirm the analysis of time as a structure of existence. Chatman's view of narrative as a discourse distinguishes between a sequence of events and the discourse which presents them. All discourse involves time while the internal structure of all narratives is temporal. Goodman is unwilling to accept the characterization of narrative as the peculiarly temporal species of discourse citing examples from painting which tells a story but has no temporal sequence. The difference between narratives and descriptions is not a matter of kind but of degree. While agreeing partially with Goodman Kermode suggests that narrative is a product of two interwoven processes—the presentation of a fable and its progressive interpretation Derrida rejects the genre-concept of narrative on the basis of his 'law of impurity'. A text's beeing literary and of a particular genre simultaneously includes and excludes the trait by which it is that kind. Therefore there is the problem of identification.

One might notice, while enjoying very well the intellectual flight of the authors in their theoretical imagination, a lacona of a sort of practical guidance as to distinguish clearly the narrative from the nonnarrative and secondly, lack of a precise sense of knowledge of which narrative is a mode. What exactly is the kind of knowledge we get when we apply the concept of narrative to the real world? But perhaps, the lack of this precision is the very essence of the grandeur of the concept that the varieties of investigations undertaken in the volume exhibit.

Professor Mitcheel must be complimented for presenting us the volumes that look spectacular and contain miracles.

A. C. Sukla

John Skorupski, *Symbol and Theory : A Philosophical Study of Theories of Religion in Social Anthropology*, Cambridge university Press, London, Pbk, 1983, PP. XV+265.

The very title of the book suggests the multidisciplinary status of the author's probe into the concept of 'symbol' that has been constantly troubling philosophers, social anthropologists and literary theorists and practioners as well as the visual artists and the critics of the arts. Recently Hazard Adams has brought out a marvellous book *Philosophy of the Literary Symbolic* with the University of Florida Press which exhaustively deals with the concept of symbol in literature right from the writings of Kant to the present' day existentialist—Paul Ricoeur. The central focus of the present work under review is on what is called the intellectualist conception of religion and magic in traditional cultures. The author examines i) how this conception can be made plausible and how it relates to

various philosophical issues involved in the understanding of traditional cultures and ii) the alternative conceptions of the nature of religion and magic to be found in social anthropology that take the idea of symbolic meaning as their key interpretative concept.

The book has three parts : I. The Framework of Belief, II. Ritual Action and III. The Framework of Belief : Intellectualism with an appendix on Relativism and Rational Belief. The first part traces and assesses the meaning of 'ritual belief' and its relation to 'ritual action' as approached conflictingly by sevsral powerful thinkers such as wittgenstein and Durkheim. The second part analizes critically the concept of ritual as a symbolic and communicative action with ample illustrations from the actual rituals and the writings of Durkheim and Frazer. The third part concentrating upon the relation between scientific and traditional modes of thought demonstrates the way ideas from recent philosophy of science have affected the intellectualist comparison of these two kinds of thought offering finally an account of 'traditional' (or primitive) religious beliefs as resulting from this 'intellectualist' approach. The Principal authors invoked in this part are Durkheim, Horton and Lévy-Brudh.

What is remarkable about the book is not any decisive conclusion that the author proposes to offer. It is rather the masterly conceptual control over the theories he anilizes which impresses the reader highly. The thesis, though an interdisciplinary work, is more philosophical than anthropological as more reflective than experimental simply because the author is a philosopher and not a sociologist to base his observations on fieldworks. Skorupski deserves our high admiration for two distinct qualities : he makes us aware of the vast area and critical implication of the concept and function of symbol and secondly, intensifies his researches within a framework the limits of which he decides very wisely. Therefore, the elimination of the context of structural theories of myth from the book enhances its dspth and intensity without any damage of dignity in any case.

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